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LIBRARY EXTENSION UNDER THE WPA

*An Appraisal of an Experiment
in Federal Aid*

By

EDWARD BARRETT STANFORD



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO · ILLINOIS

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PUBLISHED MAY 1944

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Grateful acknowledgment is made for all the assistance which helped to make this study possible. The American Library Association and the Graduate Library School contributed substantially toward the undertaking through fellowship grants.

Edward A. Chapman, Director of the WPA Library Service Section in Washington; Nancy Blair, State Supervisor of the WPA Library Project in South Carolina; and Lee F. Zimmerman, Director of Libraries, of the Library Division of the Minnesota State Department of Education all gave generously of their time for consultation and made the records of their respective offices available for the purposes of this project.

Numerous individual supervisors of WPA library service demonstrations and local library officials also supplied essential information for the study and made it possible for the writer to observe the operation of many phases of WPA library assistance activities in the field.

Special thanks are due to Dr. Carleton Bruns Joeckel for his thoughtful counsel in planning the study and for his helpful criticism of its separate chapters, and to Dr. Louis Round Wilson for his discriminating reading of the manuscript and his constructive suggestions for its improvement.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to my wife, Maverette Stanford, for inspiration and encouragement during the entire course of the study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From the early days of federal emergency work relief in the United States libraries and librarians have shared in its benefits through a wide variety of "library projects." Since 1933-34 they have participated increasingly in federally-supported construction activities and in "women's and professional," "white-collar," and "community service" programs of such agencies as the FERA, CWA and CWS, PWA, WPA, and NYA.¹

This governmental assistance, although primarily concerned with relieving unemployment, has made possible the construction and repair of numerous library buildings, the preparation of union catalogs and special indexes, the physical renovation of millions of dilapidated books, the expansion of existing library facilities, and the establishment of demonstration library units in areas without tax-supported public library service.

By the end of 1940 the library projects of the WPA alone were employing over 27,000 persons on a program involving an annual expenditure of over \$18,000,000 of federal funds. Therefore, while federal aid to libraries has never been authorized formally by special legislation, it is apparent that indirectly, almost by accident, a rather substantial amount of federal library assistance has come into being as a by-product of the emergency work relief program. Moreover, this activity is of such scope that it constitutes a factor to be considered in planning any thoroughgoing proposal for future federal library aid.

¹Throughout this study the following abbreviations are used. FERA refers to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, CWA to the Federal Civil Works Administration, CWS to the Civil Works Service program, PWA to the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (later the Public Works Administration), WPA to the Works Progress Administration (later the Work Projects Administration), and NYA to the National Youth Administration.

Purpose and Scope of the Study

The central objective of this study is to examine the WPA program of assistance to libraries as an experiment in federal aid. Library work relief has been one type of WPA activity since this agency's establishment in 1935. This study traces the administrative growth of library projects to 1942. Since all WPA activities were drastically curtailed after July, 1941, however, the fiscal year 1940-1941 (specifically the spring of 1941) is the period used for evaluation. The study concerns itself with library projects of other federal programs only as they relate to WPA library activity or contribute to a better understanding of it.

The WPA was selected for consideration because among all the various work agencies of the federal government it alone has developed a program of library assistance with sufficient unity of purpose, continuity of operation, and stability of basic policy to permit objective appraisal. Throughout the study attention is concentrated largely upon the extension or demonstration aspects of the program because according to the official rules for WPA project operation "the governing objective [of WPA library projects] shall be to assist established library agencies in stimulating local reception of complete and permanent library service as a regular public function."²

No attempt is made to describe in detail or to evaluate library work projects in each of the forty-eight states. Nor is project operation summarized for the United States as a whole, except in terms of total figures. Too many local variations exist among the states to warrant making generalizations for the nation on the basis of conditions in any one state or group of states. Nevertheless, this study treats WPA library activity at both the national and the state level, in separate chapters.

Although the study is concerned primarily with the WPA library assistance program as it existed in the spring of 1941, considerable space is devoted to tracing the development of li-

²U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Operating Procedure No. G-5. Operating Procedures for Specific Professional and Service Projects. Section 20: Library Service Projects" (revised May, 1941), p. 1. (Mimeographed.)

brary work relief since 1933, to provide a frame of reference for the detailed treatment of project organization and operation in 1940-1941. Basic statistics on WPA library assistance are presented and the implications of the program for the future of federal library aid are discussed.

At the national level the entire organization of WPA library projects is described and evaluated in terms of recognized principles of administration and accepted library extension practice. At the state level two case studies of individual state-wide projects are presented, to illustrate two fundamentally different approaches to the use of federal aid for library development. The two states selected for this detailed treatment are South Carolina and Minnesota, states whose geographical, political, economic, and social conditions are strikingly dissimilar, and whose WPA library projects therefore evolved along entirely different patterns. Since the two projects are not essentially comparable, no attempt is made to evaluate them together. Rather, they serve to show how WPA library assistance, though a federally-operated program, was adapted at the state level to differing situations, predispositions, and needs.

In terms of an hypothesis this study is concerned with testing the following fundamental proposition:

Notwithstanding its primary objective of providing work for needy persons, the WPA, through its state-wide project program, has developed a pattern of federal library assistance and extension by demonstration that is essentially sound.

In the course of the study appropriate evidence bearing on this proposition is introduced, and at the end such conclusions as the data warrant are presented.

Definitions

In the above hypothesis a number of terms require definition, as they are construed in this study.

The "primary objective" of the WPA is expressly stated in the 1941 Emergency Relief Appropriation Act as follows: "to provide work for needy persons on useful public projects. . . ."³ This goal is emphasized here to call attention to the fact that

³U.S. 73d Cong., 3d sess., H.J. Res. 544. Joint Resolution, Making Appropriations for Work Relief and Relief, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1941.

all library activities undertaken by the WPA are necessarily conditioned by the limitations of a work relief program and are subservient to it. Only by recognizing this fact can a fair evaluation of WPA library projects be made.

The term "state-wide" is an expression used extensively to describe the present organization of WPA library activities at the state level. It refers to the policy--adopted generally throughout the nation since 1938--of uniting all WPA library work in each state under a single sponsor. Before that time it had been customary for individual local bodies to sponsor independent library projects, a practice which frequently gave rise to wasteful duplication of effort, petty disputes over jurisdiction, unhealthy competition, and jealous independence instead of co-operation among communities. Thus, a "state-wide library project" today is an undertaking embracing within a single administrative framework all WPA library activity in the state, including both aid to existing libraries and the extension of library service to new areas by demonstration.

It should be noted, however, that projects so designated are not necessarily "state-wide" in the sense that they operate library units in every part of a state at once. Complete state coverage in terms of library service is admittedly a long-range objective of any state-wide program. Nevertheless, in the interest of maintaining a satisfactory standard of quality in the service rendered, project activity in some states is limited to the development of intensive area-wide demonstrations in a few selected counties for specific periods of time.

Above all, WPA state-wide library projects are not to be considered as independent activities established by the federal government without regard to existing state and local libraries. It has been a fundamental policy of the Library Service Section to keep the library work program strictly an assistance undertaking, in which the WPA, by providing workers, professional advice and supervision, together with certain equipment and supplies, assists the legally authorized library agencies of the various states to develop permanent library service in areas formerly without it.

The specific kinds of work eligible for inclusion in a state-wide project are largely those performed in regularly established library systems. However, in order to avoid merely

taking over the regular functions of such libraries, only such activities as could be shown to constitute a real expansion or extension of existing services might be authorized for project performance. Other characteristics of the state-wide WPA library program are described in chapter v, where its organization and administration are discussed in detail.

The "pattern of federal library assistance and extension by demonstration" mentioned in the hypothesis stated above refers to the concept of library development through federal work relief assistance exemplified by the policies of the WPA Library Service Section in Washington.

This pattern (as described in chapter v) represents a position not determined hastily or even at any one time. Instead it embodies the cumulative experience of several years of trying, through various federal agencies, to fit the requirements of a sound library extension program to the opportunities offered by relief employment funds. As such, this pattern has never been described in a single, neat formula. However, it is clearly distinguishable as it appears in the many different reports, operating procedures, technical circulars,⁴ and office memoranda of the Library Service Section.

The specific details of the WPA pattern of library assistance are not ideal for a general program of federal aid for libraries, since they were developed to meet the peculiar conditions of an emergency employment organization. Nevertheless, this pattern does contain elements that could be applied usefully in planning such a program in the future. In its appraisal, therefore, this study emphasizes these constructive aspects of WPA library assistance, as it was organized and administered in the spring of 1941.

Finally, the term "soundness" (referred to in this study's hypothesis as stated on page 3) refers to the basic validity, stability, or orthodoxy of the WPA library program in terms of accepted principles of administrative organization and a consensus of best practice in the field of library extension. Although no

⁴U.S. Work Projects Administration, "WPA Technical Series, Library Service Circulars" (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1940-). No. 1, "Union Cataloging Projects," No. 2, "Selection and Administration of Project-Owned Books," No. 3, "Training Manual," No. 4, "Central Cataloging Service."

single code of principles has been formally adopted in either the field of administration or in that of library extension certain basic generally accepted elements are to be found in the literature of both fields. In evaluating library assistance of the WPA, therefore, this study applies two devices, based on the literature of administration and library extension, to determine the program's essential soundness. The first of these is the "principles of administrative organization" discussed by Floyd W. Reeves in an article by that title.⁵ The second consists of a "code of best practice for library extension," developed from a study of theory and practice in this field. As a third element in the appraisal of WPA library assistance the general effectiveness of the program is considered, in terms of services rendered, local tax support gained for library service, and its development of techniques of extension by demonstration.

Sources of Data

The data upon which this study is based were obtained from five major sources:

1. Published books and periodical articles on the WPA and its library assistance program, on library extension practice, and on public administration.
2. Federal laws and congressional hearings pertaining to the establishment, administration, and continuation of the WPA and other work relief agencies.
3. Various office memoranda, official reports, operating manuals, and administrative rules and regulations of the WPA, of its Library Service Section, and of individual state-wide library projects. These sources of information are somewhat heterogeneous but nevertheless vitally important to this study.
4. Selected statistics showing the extent and nature of WPA assistance to libraries throughout the United States and in certain individual states, and statistical reports of library service or construction activities carried on under the FERA, the PWA, and the NYA.
4. Correspondence and interviews with numerous individuals associated with or interested in specific federal library assistance activities, and field notes from extended vis-

⁵Floyd W. Reeves, "Principles of Administrative Organization," Current Issues in Library Administration, ed. Carleton B. Joeckel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 1-21.

its to selected state-wide WPA library project headquarters and operating units of county library demonstrations.

Method

The method of investigation used in this study is that of applied research in public administration as described by Priffner.⁶ Moreover, one particular device used in the portion of the study concerned with evaluation is the case study.

This device, which emphasizes analysis of the individual unit as a case, as opposed to a statistical sampling of many units as a group, is particularly well suited to studies in the field of public administration. Unlike the physical scientist the student of public administration cannot set up experimental situations in which important variables may be controlled, but must study existing human organizations as he finds them, operating under different conditions in every community.

Priffner points out, with reference to the case method, that because of the heterogeneity of data and phenomena in the study of public administration a better understanding of fundamental relationships may result from studying a small number of cases intensively than from analyzing quantitatively a small array of data from many. He then comments:

There is a sound basis for this type of approach in those fields where valid measurements have not been developed and where the intangible nature of the subject matter makes generalization difficult. This would seem to be a justifiable basis for development of case study materials as sponsored by the Public Administration Committee of the Social Science Research Council.⁷

For example, in City Manager Government in the United States,⁸ a recent review and appraisal of this particular form of government, the case method is used with success. Just as the many differences in local conditions made the acquisition of statistically comparable data from many cities virtually impossible, so the concomitant occurrence of many different changes in in-

⁶John M. Priffner, Research Methods in Public Administration (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1940), chap. i.

⁷Ibid., p. 94.

⁸H. A. Stone, D. K. Price, and K. H. Stone, City Manager Government in the United States (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1940).

dividual cities from year to year prevented the authors from attributing "before-and-after" changes in government costs and services to the city manager plan alone. As a result the method of statistical comparison was abandoned, and the case study method, with special emphasis on administrative techniques, was adopted for the entire investigation.

In the present study, likewise in a sense a review and appraisal of a particular solution to a governmental and social problem, the case method seems justified for similar reasons. Wide variations in local conditions and needs and in project administration at the state level seriously limit the extent to which the whole program can be judged by drawing generalizations from data compiled for the forty-eight states. Hence, instead of attempting to evaluate nation-wide project activity on the basis of composite data, this study presents a case analysis of the program as it is represented in the objectives and policies of the Library Service Section in Washington.

At the state level the case method is also used. Programs of individual states are so largely affected by peculiar local circumstances that no attempt is made to generalize from the available data. Rather, case studies of two strikingly different state-wide WPA library projects are presented as separate entities. The two states selected for intensive study, South Carolina and Minnesota, represent fundamentally different characteristics and do not lend themselves to treatment by comparison. Individually they exemplify two distinct methods of extending library service to rural areas. Together they serve to show how a single federal assistance program can be adapted to dissimilar state and local circumstances and predispositions.

Among the various specific techniques of obtaining data for the study all four of the usual methods have been employed.

Observation has been employed as a method of obtaining information during visits to numerous library project centers and distributing stations, and through attendance at citizens' library committee meetings, WPA workers' training classes, and local radio broadcasts.

Interviews have been held with the Director of the WPA Library Service Section, with state WPA library project supervisors, with representatives of citizens' groups, with project sponsors, and with many field supervisors and certified project

workers⁹ on local units.

Correspondence has been conducted with officials of the WPA and the American Library Association, with state library leaders, and with individual county librarians and citizens.

Study of selected publications on public administration and library extension, following a search of the literature of these two fields, constituted the first step of preparation for this project, and was continued during its progress.

Thus, no single technique has been used exclusively. Rather, various methods were employed as the nature of the information desired seemed to require.

Arrangement of the Study

The text of the study is presented in the following sequence of chapters.

Chapter ii introduces the entire subject of library work relief by summarizing the development and organization of library assistance under the various federal emergency agencies which preceded the establishment of the WPA in 1935. These agencies, treated in chronological order, are the FERA, the Civil Works Program (CWA and CWS), and the PWA.

Chapter iii traces the evolution of library activities in federally-operated work programs (the WPA and the NYA) since 1935.

Chapter iv presents and analyzes basic statistics on the scope and distribution of federal emergency library aid. It discusses the available data on library project employment, expenditures, and achievement through 1941. It tests the general adequacy of the program as an example of federal library aid by comparing the distribution of WPA library assistance among the states and regions during 1940-41 with several factors related to differences in relative need. It also presents cumulative statistics on the construction and repair of library buildings that had been accomplished with the aid of the PWA, the WPA, and the NYA by the end of June, 1941.

Chapter v describes the organization and administration

⁹A "certified" WPA worker is one who has been certified by local relief authorities as being legitimately eligible for relief.

of state-wide WPA library projects in 1941, as revealed in the objectives, policies, and functions of the Library Service Section of that agency in Washington. The concluding portion of the chapter considers the extent to which the entire program embodies sound principles of administrative organization and accepted library extension practice.

Chapter vi is the first of two case studies of library project operation and management at the state level. It treats the South Carolina state-wide WPA project, as an example of the use of WPA assistance to extend immediate library service into all sections of a state simultaneously. Before WPA most communities in South Carolina were without public libraries, and few counties were wealthy enough to support strong libraries alone. The implications for regional organization, therefore, together with the problem presented by the state's high proportion of Negroes, children, illiterates, and rural residents, and its low economic ability, make South Carolina a particularly interesting problem to students of federal aid. As a library demonstration program the South Carolina project is notable for its extensive use of bookmobiles and its inclusion of service to schools in its county demonstrations.

Chapter vii, which presents the second case study of a state-wide project, discusses Minnesota's use of WPA assistance as an example of a limited, carefully controlled program, emphasizing the establishment of permanent county library support. In Minnesota WPA aid was not dispersed throughout the state, but was concentrated on operating a few strong demonstrations in counties selected by the state's official library agency in accord with a definite, long-range plan of state-wide library development. Just as the environmental conditions of this state differ from those of South Carolina, so the policies and techniques of the Minnesota project reflect a somewhat different concept of rural library service. In South Carolina the entire program was developed around bookmobile service. In Minnesota not a single bookmobile was used, for its program was based on a system of small, but carefully selected collections distributed from numerous lending stations or deposits in each demonstration area.

Chapter viii, the final chapter of the study, summarizes the findings of the preceding chapters, discusses the primary

elements of strength and weakness in the WPA library assistance program, and calls attention to such aspects of its organization or operating procedure as may be of use in future library planning.

CHAPTER II

LIBRARY WORK RELIEF BEFORE 1935¹

Throughout the United States free public library service and relief of the needy have both been traditionally local responsibilities. However, in the last decade substantial amounts of federal funds have been expended on these two functions. Chapters ii and iii undertake to show the manner in which the federal government, owing to the unemployment emergency which accompanied the nation-wide economic depression, assumed certain relief burdens and indirectly made available "federal aid" for library development.

This chapter considers federal participation in public relief and the development of library work projects up to 1935. It characterizes the "made work" projects of 1932; it discusses library activities under the FERA and the Civil Works Program during 1933-34. It deals with the Emergency Work Relief Program (FERA) of 1934-35, and it treats briefly the building program of the PWA since 1933.

Chapter iii, concerned with the period since 1935, discusses library project development under the semi-permanent federal Works Program. It considers WPA library activities from the beginning and discusses the growth and decline of NYA library

¹In tracing the development of federal participation in relief this chapter has relied heavily on the following sources: Josephine C. Brown, Public Relief 1929-1939 (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1940).

Doris Carothers, Chronology of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, May 12, 1933 to December 31, 1935 (U.S. WPA Division of Social Research Monograph No. 6) (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937).

L. Lázló Ecker-R. (ed.), "Financing Relief and Recovery," Municipal Year Book 1937 (Chicago: International City Managers' Association, 1937), pp. 372-493.

A. W. Macmahon, J. D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden, The Administration of Federal Work Relief (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1941).

Edward A. Williams, Federal Aid for Relief (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939).

projects.

Federal Participation in Relief

The chain of events that led to the development of federal library work projects was started when the government assumed responsibility for relief of the nation's unemployed during the depression years. By 1930-31 it began to be evident that state and local resources would not be adequate to carry the burden alone. Accordingly, in 1932, under strong pressure from the states, Congress first made federal relief assistance available by passing the Emergency Relief and Construction Act.² This act authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to loan to state and local governments up to \$300,000,000 for relief purposes.

By the spring of 1933, however, it was clear that more federal assistance was urgently needed. Fifteen million workers were unemployed. Many local governments were on the verge of bankruptcy. In March, immediately after the new President took office, all banks in the nation closed their doors. In order to meet this new crisis Congress hurriedly passed the Federal Emergency Relief Act in May, 1933, authorizing the RFC to issue an additional \$500,000,000 for state and local relief--this time in the form of outright grants-in-aid.³

Neither of these extraordinary appropriations was expected to alter the basic status of relief as a local concern. To be sure, the 1933 legislation created a new governmental agency, the FERA, to administer the grants; but both acts were definitely considered merely as emergency measures by which the federal government would help the states to finance their relief burdens during the national crisis.

The prevailing note of the 1932 relief act had been self-liquidation, that is, the limitation of federal assistance to reimbursable loans. It had been confidently expected that business would soon revive, whereupon federal aid for relief could be dis-

²Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932. Public No. 302, 72d Cong., 47 U.S. Statutes 709, c. 520. Approved July 21, 1932.

³Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933. Public No. 15, 73d Cong., 48 U.S. Statutes 55, c. 30. Approved May 12, 1933.

continued, and responsibility for the needy would again reside solely with state and local authorities. However, by 1933 all hope of maintaining federal relief aid on a self-liquidating basis had to be abandoned; and in subsequent relief acts, through which the government gradually assumed more and more of the nation's relief burden, direct grants were substituted for loans.

By 1935, although business conditions showed some signs of improvement, a peak relief load of almost twenty million persons was being financed largely by the federal government. In fact, during the three years 1933 through 1935 federal funds accounted for over 70 per cent of all public money spent for emergency relief in the United States; and in one-fourth of the states over 90 per cent of the relief effort was financed from Washington.⁴

In the late spring of 1935 the federal government finally faced the issue of formulating its policy on the provision of public assistance. Previously it had merely drifted along, meeting each crisis with emergency legislation, hoping it would be the last, but always becoming more deeply involved in relief. In his message to Congress on January 4, 1935, the President had declared emphatically, "the federal government must and shall quit this business of relief."⁵ Therefore, in the legislation which established the new work relief and social security programs in that year, the federal government made clear the specific types of public aid for which it was willing to assume at least partial responsibility.

General direct relief, the government held, should remain primarily a state and local responsibility. Accordingly, after 1935 this function was largely returned to the states. Today federal participation in relief centers in two types of assistance. Under its social security program the government provides extensive direct aid to certain specified categories of those in need: the blind, the aged, and dependent mothers and children.⁶

⁴Arthur E. Burns, "Federal Emergency Relief Administration," Municipal Year Book 1937 (Chicago: International City Managers' Association, 1937), p. 408.

⁵U.S. 74th Cong., 1st sess., President's Message to Congress, House Document No. 1, January 4, 1935.

⁶Social Security Act. Public No. 271, 74th Cong., 49 U.S. Statutes 620, c. 531. Approved August 14, 1935, and Social

The largest single federal contribution to relief, however, is the provision of work opportunities for needy adults and youth. Under the diversified work programs of the WPA and the NYA the government has provided extensive opportunities for useful employment and the development of individual skills in unemployed adults and youth.

The chronological development and employment trends in the six federally-supported work programs affecting libraries are presented graphically in Figures 1 and 2. A tabular summary showing the origin, general character, administrative status, and employment peak of these programs appears in Table 1.

Library Participation in Work Programs

In the course of its transition from non-participation in relief to active acceptance of major responsibility for specific categories of public assistance the federal government has contributed to library development through the work programs of several of its emergency agencies. Among these agencies are the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Federal Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Civil Works Service (CWS), the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works (PWA)--later the Public Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration (WPA)--later the Work Projects Administration, and the National Youth Administration (NYA). Much of the credit for the inclusion of library assistance in these programs is due the officers of the American Library Association, who rendered continual advisory assistance to relief officials and to library authorities in the planning and development of library projects.

Library Projects before 1933

During the early years of the depression, while state and local governments were still supporting their needy unemployed entirely from their own resources, little work relief was provided, especially for white collar workers. In 1932, however, when the federal government began to assist in financing state relief, broader work programs were begun in several states. Libraries began to obtain relief workers for re-expanding curtailed

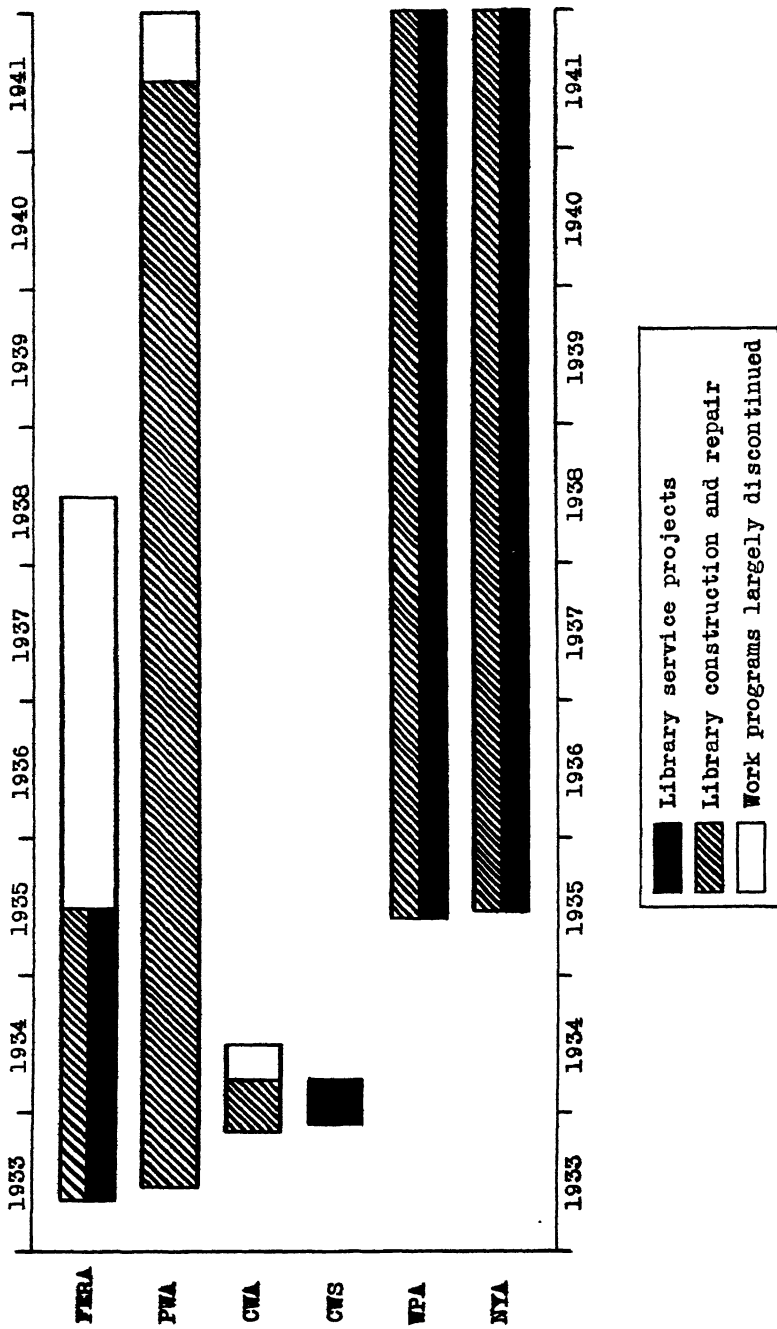


Fig. 1.-- Chronology of federally-supported work programs affecting libraries, 1933-1941.

TABLE 1

TABULAR SUMMARY ON FEDERALLY SUPPORTED WORK PROGRAMS AFFECTING LIBRARIES

	FERA	CWA	CWS	PWA	WPA	NYA
Title	Fed. Emerg. Relief Adm.	Fed. Civil Works Adm.	Civil Works Service	Fed. Emerg. Adm. of Civil Works (Pub. Works Adm. since 7/1/39)	Works Progress Adm. (Work Projects Adm. since 7/1/39)	National Youth Adm.
Created by	F.E.R. Act of 1933 (48 Stat. 55)	Exec. Order No. 6420-B	Adm. Order of FERA-CWA Chief	Nat'l. Ind. Recov. Act of 1933	Exec. Order No. 7034	Exec. Order No. 7086
Date	5/12/33	11/9/33	11/33	6/16/33	5/6/35	6/26/35
Discontinued	6/35	4/1/34	4/1/34	6/40	Still in operation	Still in operation
Work Projects Terminated	6/30/38	6/1/34	6/1/34	Still alive	Still alive	Still alive
Status in Fed. Gov't.	Independent	Independent	Under FERA (and CWA)	Independent (in Fed. Wks. Agency since 7/1/39)	Independent (in Fed. Wks. Agency since 7/1/39)	Under WPA (in Fed. Security Ag. since 7/1/39)
Purpose	Relief	Rel. and Recov.	Relief	Recovery	Relief	Relief
Type of Org.	Allocating	Operating	"Operating"	Allocating	Operating	Operating
Employment Peak	1/35	1/18/34	1/25/34	7/34	11/38	2/41
Employment Peak	2,500,000	4,054,568	211,814	650,653	3,334,594	940,000
Major Projects Affecting Libraries	Library Service and Extension	Construction	Library Service and Extension	Construction	Library Service and Extension and Construction	Library Service and Extension (and some Construction)

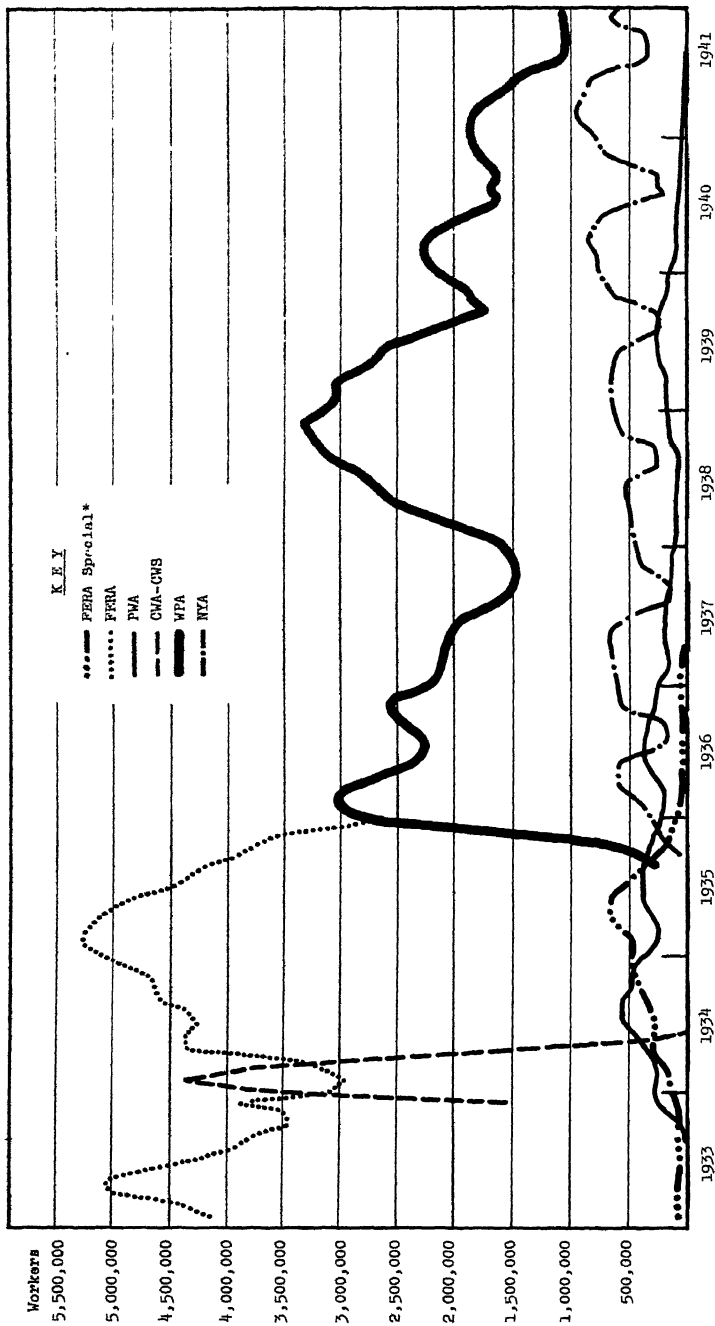


Fig. 2.--Employment on federal work programs and beneficiaries of selected public relief programs in the United States, 1933-1941.
Source: U.S. Congress, House. Committee on Appropriations, 77th Cong., 1st sess., Hearings before the Subcommittee on Appropriations for Work Relief and Relief for the fiscal year 1942.

*PERA Special programs include: Transient Relief, Emergency Education, Student Aid, and Rural Rehabilitation.

services and for undertaking various temporary "made work" projects, such as preparing special indexes, mounting and filing clippings and pictures, mending books, and repairing buildings.

Most of these activities were begun as "stopgap" efforts, planned and initiated by individual libraries in co-operation with state and local relief authorities. They were necessarily temporary in character, hasty in conception, weak in supervision, and very uneven in the quality of their personnel. Moreover, as relief resources, available workers, and the pressure of other types of projects fluctuated, many of them began, expanded, and were discontinued before they could accomplish anything of permanent worth.

Because of their localized and "fly-by-night" character and their relative insignificance in contrast to other kinds of work projects these first ventures in library work relief were never reported systematically; so no complete record of their scope and achievement exists today. Usually they were included without specific mention in broad reports on clerical, educational, white collar, or women's projects. However, one may find occasional references to them in state and local library reports or bulletins⁷ and in some reports of state emergency relief authorities (variously known as ERA's, SERA's, TERA's, etc.) during this period.

In the spring and summer of 1933 library work projects began to expand, as it became increasingly clear that more widespread and varied types of work must be hastily developed if large groups of the able-bodied unemployed were to be provided for without a general dole. In the next few years, as one federal work agency after another began to undertake programs affecting libraries, the nature and scope of library projects gradually took on a more substantial character and improved in general soundness of purpose and procedure.

Each federal library work program differed from the others. In fact, each program evolved continually itself, as changing administrative policies and the restrictions of succe-

⁷"Civil Works Service Projects," Library Occurrent, XI (1933), 162-63.

Ralph Munn, "Made Work," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVII (1933), 189-90.

sive appropriation acts affected objectives and conditions of project operation. Thus, while one can generalize concerning library projects under each agency, it must be remembered that, owing to great variations in the local administration of each program, characteristic distinctions among them were neither absolute nor complete. Moreover, it should be noted that such differences as do appear in retrospect evolved gradually with the growth and development of organizational patterns and procedures.

Early Library Projects under the FERA

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, generally referred to as the FERA, was the first of the federal emergency agencies to become actively concerned with library service projects. It was created in May, 1933, as an independent federal agency to administer the distribution of \$500,000,000 in grants to the states for relief purposes.⁸ As additional emergency appropriations were allocated to it for administration, its importance increased until 1935, when the WPA took over the function of providing work relief. As the federal government gradually withdrew from the field of general, direct relief, FERA activity declined proportionately, until it was officially terminated in 1938.

FERA funds, like those of the 1932 Emergency Relief and Construction Act, were disbursed by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation; but their allocation to state and local governments was determined by the FERA in its capacity as a social rather than a fiscal agency. Under this new arrangement the attempt to keep federal relief assistance on a self-liquidating basis was deliberately abandoned. In accord with the provisions of the Federal Emergency Relief Act⁹ outright non-reimbursable grants were made to state governors, to be administered as they saw fit, within such general conditions as the FERA might specify. Thus, the major power of determining the character of federally-financed relief remained with individual state relief authorities (a situation which ultimately permitted political manipulation of some

⁸Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933. Public No. 15, 73d Cong., 48 U.S. Statutes 55, c. 30. Approved May 12, 1933.

⁹Ibid.

state programs and made the establishment of uniform standards of relief administration virtually impossible).

Since FERA funds, once granted, became the property of state and local governments, there was wide variation in the uses to which they were put. The FERA urged the recipients to focus their relief efforts on work projects as far as possible. Nevertheless, since work relief requires substantial expenditures for planning, materials, and technical supervision in order to be effective, a number of states, already financially overburdened, naturally preferred to apply these federal funds toward a program consisting largely of direct relief. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that over half of all cases assisted with FERA funds received direct rather than work relief.¹⁰ Several states, however, in a sincere desire to avoid the demoralizing consequences of a general dole, undertook to develop diversified programs of made work, supplementing federal with local funds. It was through the pioneering efforts of these states that library projects began to take on a national significance.

As a grant-administering agency the FERA was charged with the functions of allocation, formulation of general rules and policies, reporting and research, and assistance to the states in program planning and the development of sound techniques of project operation and supervision. The three major divisions of the FERA organization were, in accord with these functions, (1) Relations with States, (2) Research, Statistics and Finance, and (3) the Work Division. There was also, for a time, a Rural Rehabilitation Division to assist the states in planning suitable types of aid for needy rural families.

Since the actual operation of relief programs was entirely under the control of state authorities, the FERA field force had to confine its work largely to providing staff or advisory assistance to the states. Hence, the effectiveness of FERA recommendations depended upon the ability of its representatives to establish cordial relations with individual state and local relief officers. In some states such mutual respect and understanding was never achieved. In others, however, FERA officials were notably successful in furthering the development of sound and diversified work programs.

¹⁰Burns, op. cit., p. 395.

The first work projects undertaken with FERA assistance differed little from those previously carried on with state and local funds. In other words, they emphasized manual labor almost to the exclusion of all other kinds of work. However, when the true extent of unemployment among women and white collar workers began to be realized, special efforts were made to develop projects suited to their abilities, with the result that eventually research and surveys, education, and library service began to receive new consideration from relief agencies.

The increased interest in white-collar projects first appeared in the planning headquarters of the FERA in Washington, where the whole relief problem was being studied intensively. In August, 1933, Administrator Harry Hopkins authorized the establishment of the Emergency Education Program, and in September he approved its extension to include comprehensive adult education projects.¹¹ However, since the FERA lacked the authority to compel the adoption of its recommendations some states continued to restrict their relief programs almost wholly to the familiar type of "pick-and-shovel" projects or to direct relief.

By October, 1933, since many states were still confining aid to women largely to direct relief, the FERA Administrator created a separate Women's Division within his organization by an order to the states, which pointed out that in spite of previous suggestions from Washington "very little has been done to develop a program of work relief for women."¹² The function of this office was to further the development of work activities such as sewing, canning, teaching, and library service. At the same time he requested each state relief agency to appoint a qualified woman to co-operate with this division in organizing such projects at the state level.

Library Projects under the Civil Works Program

Suddenly, in November, 1933, the entire FERA organization was called upon to take charge of a wholly new endeavor, a

¹¹Carothers, op. cit., pp. 15, 20.

¹²Harry Hopkins, "FERA Serial Communication Series A, No. 21" (October 10, 1933), quoted in Williams, op. cit., p. 109.

federally-operated¹³ emergency work program hastily created to tide the nation through its most serious unemployment crisis. This was the Civil Works Program, which (through the CWA and the CWS) handled all work relief activity during the winter of 1933-34.

The Federal Civil Works Administration.---The CWA, officially entitled the Federal Civil Works Administration, was established November 9, 1933, to provide immediate jobs for some four million unemployed men and women.¹⁴ The long-range public works program (under PWA) had not created widespread employment as rapidly as had been hoped, owing to unavoidable delays in the planning, submission, review, and approval of project applications and to various legal obstacles to immediate local participation. Moreover, by the fall of 1933 unemployment had increased to such proportions that even with FERA help some states were unable to provide for many destitute families. The only solution, therefore, seemed to be for the federal government to create immediate employment, if widespread suffering was to be avoided. Hence, the CWA was established as a federally-operated work program to reduce relief rolls and to "prime the pump of business" by releasing purchasing power among consumers.

The whole character of the CWA grew out of its major function: to create jobs for millions of persons within a month's time. In the interest of speed, therefore, authority and responsibility were decentralized and regulations were kept at a minimum. State and local relief officials and field representatives of the FERA, sworn in almost overnight as federal CWA officers, provided the program with an immediate organization directly responsible to Washington. This staff was granted full authority to approve projects at the state level and to stimulate the inauguration of suitable projects in every community according to its need.

Two general principles governed project eligibility.

¹³A "federally-operated" program is one completely controlled and supervised by federal officials. The FERA, while "federally-supported," was controlled by state and local authorities. The CWA, CWS, WPA, and NYA were "federally-operated."

¹⁴U.S. President, Executive Order 6420-B, November 9, 1933 established the Federal Civil Works Administration under authority of Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act, Public No. 67, 48 U.S. Statutes 195; c. 90. Approved June 16, 1933.

Projects had to be socially and economically desirable; and they had to be of such a nature that work on them could be started quickly.¹⁵ Other limitations affecting the type of activity that could be included specified that the work must be done on public property and that no regular public services--such as garbage collection and snow removal--were permissible. Large engineering or building projects were eliminated by the requirement that nothing which could not be completed in ten or twelve weeks should be attempted. Yet the fact that the funds for the CWA consisted of a grant from unallocated PWA reserves¹⁶ made it compulsory that all CWA projects relate to construction!

Administrative policies established that employees should be drawn from relief and non-relief rolls of the unemployed on an equal basis, and that wages and hours (within certain limits) should be based on prevailing scales, in place of the FERA's "subsistence budget" basis. Work was to be done by direct "force account" (day labor), not by contract, to enable the government quickly to increase or decrease its labor rolls according to need. Materials and tools were to be bought with federal funds if sponsors were unable to provide them from their own resources. Disbursing was assigned to the Veteran's Administration, since it was already well organized to perform this function on a nationwide scale. Relief workers were to be transferred directly to the CWA payroll from FERA projects or from relief rolls. Non-relief workers were to be referred to the CWA by the U.S. Employment Service or by Labor organizations. State quotas were established in Washington on the joint basis of state population (75 per cent) and the proportion of people in need in each state (25 per cent). Within this framework CWA project operation was begun just one week after the program was announced; and by its first pay day the CWA had "regular jobs" for almost a million persons.¹⁷

Owing to the basic restrictions cited above, CWA projects tended to take the form of flexible or temporary construction activities, such as road paving or repair, digging sewage or irrigation ditches, grading and landscaping parks, playgrounds, and

¹⁵U.S. Federal Civil Works Administration, Rules and Regulations No. 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933).

¹⁶Williams, op. cit., p. 115.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 113.

airports, and installing traffic controls. Indoors its achievements centered in repairing, renovating, and redecorating public buildings. Thus, the library benefits from the CWA consisted largely in the renovation of outmoded buildings, the addition of new shelving, lighting or plumbing fixtures, the repair of leaky roofs, the redecoration of public rooms and offices, and the re-landscaping of library grounds. Unfortunately, since data on library improvements were not reported separately, the total amount of CWA activity affecting libraries cannot be stated accurately. It is known, however, that in the aggregate it was substantial.¹⁸

Civil Works Service program.--It has already been noted (p. 24) that the original CWA funds were limited to use on projects concerned with construction. Because of this fact, which practically excluded women and professional and technical workers from participating in the CWA, a separate program, to be operated simultaneously, was created for workers in professional and service occupations. This program, known as the Civil Works Service program (CWS),¹⁹ was established by the FERA, to be operated by state relief authorities with FERA and state relief funds. On February 15, 1934--just six weeks before the whole Civil Works Program was discontinued--unrestricted funds were appropriated for the entire program, and CWS projects became CWA projects for a short time.

The CWS differed from the CWA in only a few respects. The most obvious difference, naturally, was the CWA's restriction to construction and CWS's to non-construction. Both programs were, to all intents and purposes, directed by the FERA, either in its own right or in its capacity as the official CWA organization. The CWS, however, depending on FERA and other relief funds, had to draw all of its workers from relief rolls; and it permitted lower minimum wages and longer minimum hours than the CWA.

Such library projects as were carried on by the Civil Works Program naturally fell within the jurisdiction of the CWS.

¹⁸One observer, who had occasion to travel extensively visiting libraries during 1934, has noted that at the time he "gained the impression that most of the public libraries of the country had been more or less completely renovated at the expense of the federal government" (C. B. Joeckel in a personal note to the writer).

¹⁹Williams, op. cit., p. 115; Carothers, op. cit., pp. 33-35.

Its activities, like those of the CWA, were largely of a temporary and flexible nature, emphasizing undertakings requiring little advance planning, few materials, and a minimum of special instruction or supervision. Also like the CWA, the CWS never compiled separate statistical reports of its library projects, so no accurate estimate of their extent can be made. However, the general character of CWS library activity is suggested by a special statement on the program issued by the American Library Association in December, 1933.²⁰ Among others it cites the following project undertakings: repairing books, providing additional library assistants, conducting community surveys, reopening branch outlets, preparing special indexes, union lists, or catalogs, organizing discussion groups, listing duplicates, conducting county library demonstrations, copying missing pages, taking inventory, cataloging, mounting maps or pictures, and providing guidance to readers.

The decline of the Civil Works Program was as rapid as its rise. By the middle of January, 1934—just two months after its creation—it had over 4,000,000 persons on its payroll. By March 15 it had barely 2,500,000; and by the middle of April all but 100,000 of its employees had been transferred back to FERA or to local relief rolls.²¹

It is almost impossible to appraise library activity under the Civil Works Program. In fact, in view of its extremely hasty beginning and its short duration it is scarcely fair to pass even superficial judgment upon it. In any case the available data are too fragmentary and unreliable to justify any attempt at an appraisal of the program as a whole.

In general, projects were not dissimilar to those begun under the FERA, since many of them were the very same projects transferred bodily to the jurisdictional framework of the Civil Works Program. The most important difference was of an administrative nature. By operating the latter program itself the federal government was able for the first time to enforce such rec-

²⁰Special Number: Library Projects under Public Works, Civil Works, and Relief Administrations," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVII (December 1, 1933), 539-51.

²¹U.S. Works Progress Administration, Analysis of Civil Works Program Statistics (Washington, June, 1939), p. 17.

ommendations as it might see fit to make concerning project planning and operation at state and local levels. Thus, whereas the FERA was limited largely to allocating funds to the states, the CWA-CWS arrangement made it possible for the government to resist local pressure groups and thereby to control the expenditure of its work relief funds in the public interest throughout the nation.

The (FERA) Emergency Work Relief Program

From April, 1934, until the WPA was established in May, 1935, work relief was again administered by state relief authorities, assisted by the FERA, in what was called the "Emergency Work Relief Program."²² During this period the Women's Division of the FERA, profiting from its experience with the Civil Works Program, began to devote its efforts actively to the co-ordination of projects involving library work and the development of uniform project procedures and minimum standards of project operation. Memoranda from the Women's Division in Washington urged the adoption of improved policies and practices in project administration. Specific mention of library projects began to appear more frequently in FERA communications to the states. Official "Working Procedures" were issued to state relief administrators for guidance in organizing traveling libraries, book repair projects, co-operative rural library service, and village reading rooms.²³ By the fall of 1934 an outline of a "state-wide library project" was worked out with library leaders and distributed to state administrators.²⁴

During this period references to individual FERA library projects began to appear in professional library journals. For example, in October, 1934, the American Library Association Bulletin cited numerous illustrations of local project activity, such as the employment of 550 workers in Mississippi to extend

²²McMahon, Millett, and Ogden, op. cit., p. 18; and Williams, op. cit., p. 110.

²³U.S. Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Work Division Bulletin, Series WDO, Title F-7, Nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, 11 (1934-35).

²⁴"Working Procedure, State Project for Public Library Service" (no imprint). (Mimeographed.)

service to new areas, the provision of library assistance to an adult education program in Evanston, Illinois, the cataloging of 200 Pennsylvania school libraries, the surveying of library facilities in the Chicago area, the continuation of the A.L.A. Portrait Index, the employment of over 200 workers on a Boston Public Library cataloging project, and the repair of nearly 400,000 library books in New Jersey alone.²⁵

By 1935, according to information released by the FERA, close to 1,000 library projects had been established, giving employment to 10,000 women in 42 states.²⁶ The projects listed fall into three major groups:

1. Manual projects, involving collecting, cleaning, mending, sorting, lettering, or shelving library materials.
2. Clerical projects, involving cataloging or indexing collections, compiling various bibliographies, typing, filing, or transcribing books into Braille.
3. Professional work, including desk assistance, story-telling, advising readers, conducting surveys, and extending library service to new areas.

Specific projects mentioned by this release were the Detroit book repair project employing 1,000 women, the Mississippi extension project which provided 43 counties with their first free library service, and the Kentucky "pack-horse library" project which inaugurated a door-to-door delivery service to bring books to isolated readers in the hill country.

A final comment in this release called attention to the desirability of library work as a type of project activity because of its low non-labor cost, permitting a maximum application of federal funds to the payment of wages. This argument, while always true of library projects as compared with construction activities, was especially valid under the FERA, since it required the sponsor to supply not only materials and working quarters but

²⁵"Library Projects under the FERA," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVIII (October, 1934), 826-39.

²⁶U.S. Federal Emergency Relief Administration, "Pack-horse Library Unique" (FERA Release, Series NO-1027, January 24, 1935). (Mimeographed); and U.S. Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Work Division, Women's Section, "Library Service through Work Projects for Women" (FERA Bulletin, Series W-62, No. 4579, January 24, 1935). (Mimeographed.)

also books and supervision required for project operation.

The PWA and Library Construction

The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, generally referred to simply as the PWA, was established as an independent federal agency in June, 1933 (pursuant to Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act)²⁷ just one month after the creation of the FERA. Unlike the FERA, however, its primary objective was business recovery, not relief. Its function was to promote the construction of large public works by making grants and loans to various governmental bodies for specific project proposals and by planning long-range programs of future public works. In order to facilitate sound planning it created the National Planning Board, which, with its successors,²⁸ has indirectly, by example, influenced the formulation of sound plans for library development.

The administrative organization of the PWA is of little immediate interest to this study, since this agency was concerned with libraries only as public buildings to be constructed or renovated with PWA funds. However, fundamental differences between the PWA and other work programs are worthy of brief mention. Whereas the WPA was a federally-operated program, the PWA, like the FERA, was primarily a financing agency. Unlike the FERA, however, which made lump allotments to the states for use at their discretion, the PWA dealt directly with individual local public bodies, and made separate grants for each project undertaken. It was empowered to grant 30 per cent (later raised to 45 per cent) of the total cost of a project and to loan the sponsor part or all of the remainder if necessary.

Work on PWA projects was to be performed by private contract with the sponsor, since the PWA was not empowered to make such contracts itself. Its main authority in this regard, as in determining constructional details, was solely the power of approval. Thus private contractors, not the government, conducted

²⁷National Industrial Recovery Act, Public No. 67, 73d Cong., 48 U.S. Statutes 195, c. 90. Approved June 16, 1933.

²⁸National Resources Board, National Resources Committee, and (since July, 1939) National Resources Planning Board.

all actual operations on PWA projects. Wages were based on prevailing scales; and in spite of efforts to make the PWA a relief program it generally permitted contractors to recruit workers from union locals or employment agencies without regard to their relief status.

The chief daily business of the PWA, therefore, was the solicitation, review, and approval of project proposals, the arrangement of financial and legal terms, and the over-all supervision of project operation. However, as has been suggested, the supervisory authority of the PWA was strictly limited, and consisted largely of the right to make sure that sponsors followed project specifications as approved, observed all of their contractual agreements, and adhered to the basic regulations of the program.

By 1942 the original PWA program stood as a substantially completed effort. The PWA itself, then entitled the Public Works Administration, was a unit within the Federal Works Agency, to which it had been transferred in 1939 under the President's reorganization legislation.²⁹ The last grants made by the PWA were for projects scheduled for completion by the end of June, 1940. On that date its accomplishments totaled over 34,000 projects completed at an estimated cost of over \$5,000,000,000.³⁰ Included in these achievements were some 113 public library building projects, at least 60 college or university library buildings, and quarters for well over 1,800 libraries in various school buildings or additions.³¹ Tables giving more detailed information on the PWA building program are presented in chapter iv (pp. 86-92), where an over-all statistical summary on library construction under the works program appears.

²⁹Reorganization Act of 1939, Public No. 19, 76th Cong., 53 U.S. Statutes 561, c. 36. Approved April 3, 1939.

³⁰U.S. Federal Works Agency, First Annual Report, 1940 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 131.

³¹U.S. Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction (Washington: Public Works Administration, 1939) (Planographed); and U.S. Public Works Administration, America Builds (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 132.

Appraisal of Library Work Projects before 1935

The preceding portion of this chapter has indicated how the federal government came to assume a major responsibility for providing public assistance after 1932. It has described the development of library projects under the FERA and the Civil Works Program. Also it has discussed briefly the character of the PWA as a federal agency that has financed the construction of numerous library buildings. Now, in perspective, just what appraisal do these early library work projects merit, both in their own right and in their relation to later developments?

First of all, it must be remembered that under each agency library activity was but a small part of the total program, compared to other types of projects. It is known that library projects increased both in number and in scope from 1933 to 1935; but it is not possible to trace their expansion accurately, owing to the lack of statistical data. Certainly, it cannot be shown that they followed any orderly course of development. Just as the whole relief effort was characterized by confusion, haste, and constant administrative reorganization, so the emergence of library projects as an increasingly important type of white-collar activity was accompanied by its share of ill-considered experiments and "boondoggling" enterprises, as well as its successes.

In characterizing the deficiencies of the entire work program of this early period, Corrington Gill (Assistant Administrator of the FERA, the CWA, and the WPA) wrote in 1937:

Moreover, the local work relief activities, financed by FERA, state, and local funds, left much to be desired. The projects were frequently of little value, the work provided was almost entirely unskilled manual work, supervisory personnel and materials were inadequate, earnings were meager, and efficiency was generally low.³²

The caliber of library projects before 1935 reflected the conditions under which they came into existence. Neither relief authorities nor librarians were ready with carefully thought out programs when federal relief was begun on a nation-wide scale in 1933. Hence it is not surprising that many of the first projects

³²Corrington Gill, "The Civil Works Administration," Municipal Year Book 1937 (Chicago: International City Managers' Association, 1937), p. 420.

were hastily conceived undertakings of a more or less "busy work" character. Moreover, in view of the constantly changing administrative conditions under which they had to operate, it is not difficult to understand why few FERA or CWS projects made substantial contributions to the permanent extension of library service. Many projects of this early period were obviously lacking in plan or direction, which is scarcely surprising since librarians themselves had no national plan for library development until 1935.³³ In addition these early projects were frequently undertaken without sufficient books or supervisory assistance to establish even temporary service on a satisfactory basis.

However, these first work relief projects did serve several valuable purposes. They provided much-needed assistance to libraries at a time when libraries generally were suffering from greatly decreased budgets and increased service demands. They demonstrated the efficacy of library work as a suitable type of project activity for women and white collar workers. They brought to light numerous weaknesses that could be avoided in subsequent endeavors. They revealed the need for planning, professional supervision, and adequate book collections as a basis for developing library projects of permanent worth. They made it evident that library project activities should be integrated on a state-wide basis. Finally, they helped to arouse groups of citizens to a new understanding of the role of library service in community life—an important factor contributing to the success of state-wide library demonstrations under the WPA today.

³³American Library Association, Planning Committee, "Looking toward National Planning," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVIII (August, 1934), 453-60; and "A National Plan for Libraries," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXIX (February, 1935), 91-98.

CHAPTER III

LIBRARY WORK RELIEF SINCE 1935

In May, 1935, the federal government undertook to clarify its policy with regard to public assistance by embarking upon a new and comprehensive undertaking known as "the Works Program."¹ It had become evident by the end of 1934 that a substantial amount of work for the unemployed would be required for a long time to come, and that state-controlled programs under the FERA, which still tended to overemphasize direct relief, were not adequately meeting the need. Therefore, by way of defining its own responsibility in assisting the needy, the government established the new undertaking as its major contribution in the sphere of public aid, and provided for federal control of the entire program to free it from self-interested manipulation by state or local pressure groups.

The Works Program originally included employment projects supported by direct allocations to regular federal departments and to at least six emergency agencies.² Later, however, it centered in the WPA work program for adults eligible for relief and the NYA part-time program for needy youth.

The WPA and Libraries

In April, 1935, Congress paved the way for the new and greatly enlarged assistance program by passing the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act providing \$4,800,000,000 "to protect and promote the general welfare" through useful projects.³

¹A. W. Macmahon, J. D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden, The Administration of Federal Work Relief (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1941), chap. 1.

²Ibid., p. 122.

³Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935, Public Res. No. 11, 74th Cong., 49 U.S. Statutes 115, c. 48. Approved April 8, 1935.

While plans were being formulated for the Works Program it had seemed advisable to establish it as a new enterprise, disassociated from previous federal assistance agencies. The CWA had become unpopular with employers and the general public because of its minimum wage requirements and its "shovel-leaning" reputation. The FERA likewise was in disrepute among state officials because of its so-called "interference" with the administration of relief at state and local levels. The PWA was generally disliked by contractors for its "red tape" and its constant scrutiny of project operation.

In May, 1935, when the new program was formally announced, the President created a wholly new and independent agency, the Works Progress Administration, to co-ordinate the entire program, including FERA, PWA, and CCC work, soil conservation, rural electrification and rehabilitation, housing, and independent professional and clerical projects.⁴ This was to be accomplished by making studies of wage and hour conditions, prescribing regulations, investigating delays, reporting on progress, and directing such research activities as the efficient administration of the program might require. In short, the new agency was to serve as the "eyes and ears" of the President to further the over-all purposes of the federal government's diversified work program.⁵

The role of the WPA as an active, operating work relief agency was barely mentioned in the President's establishing executive order. In it he merely stated that in addition to its other activities, the WPA was empowered to "recommend and carry on small useful projects designed to assure a maximum of employment in all localities."⁶ As an operating organization, therefore, the WPA was expected merely to supplement other work agencies by developing projects to meet local or emergency situations not otherwise provided for.

The WPA's rapid change from an organization charged primarily with staff functions to the largest single operating agency in the Works Program naturally requires some explanation. Harry Hopkins, who had organized and directed both the FERA and the

⁴U.S. President, Executive Order 7034, May 6, 1935.

⁵Macmahon, Millett, and Ogden, op. cit., p. 74.

⁶U.S. President, Executive Order 7034, May 6, 1935.

CWA, was appointed Administrator of the WPA. Naturally, therefore, the new agency was organized with a view toward avoiding the various weaknesses that had characterized these previous programs. Moreover, since the WPA was able to develop its field staff by virtually taking over state and local relief personnel, it was, of all the various federal agencies, best equipped to develop promptly the kinds of projects (those providing maximum employment with minimum non-labor costs) suited to the objectives of the Works Program. Finally, as a federally-operated agency⁷ it was—much more than the FERA or the PWA—able to control the use of its funds at state and local levels.

Utilizing its authority to "recommend and carry on" projects directly, the WPA began--soon after its establishment--to build up an extensive program of semi-permanent, diversified work projects within the various states. To be sure, the program was never referred to publicly as semi-permanent. But it had been learned by this time that a work program requires some degree of continuity if projects with long-range goals are to be undertaken successfully; and it was generally acknowledged that in some fields (including library service) only such projects could produce lasting, socially useful returns.

At the beginning, library work under the WPA was merely a continuation of the type of activities that had been sponsored locally as FERA or CWS projects. With time, however, WPA library projects improved in quality, organization, and general soundness, as administrative relationships became adjusted to the enlarged scope of the new work program. Basic rules governing project eligibility, working procedures for project operation, and fiscal and reporting routines were codified. Related projects were departmentalized according to groups of activities adapted to the skills of known categories of unemployed persons. Moreover, steady progress was made in the placement and training of workers, in the ability, competence, and experience of supervisory personnel, and in standards of achievement.

As a result of their experience with the FERA and the Civil Works Program, WPA officials generally were aware of the suitability of library projects as a means of employing white-

⁷See p. 23 for the distinction between the terms "federally-operated" and "federally-supported" as used in this study.

collar workers and women. Therefore, from the beginning they welcomed advice and assistance from library leaders in developing sound procedures for the operation of library projects. In fact, in the interest of developing library activities of more permanent value than those hastily undertaken during 1933 and 1934, WPA officials have endeavored increasingly to improve standards in the planning of library service demonstrations.

In the spring of 1935, when the new program was in the process of formulation, the American Library Association submitted to the WPA a proposal for a "Federal Emergency Library Project" to provide employment for approximately 50,000 persons in the extension and improvement of library service throughout the nation.⁸ For a number of reasons, including the fact that such a nationwide semi-autonomous project would not readily fit into the regular federal-state-local hierarchy of WPA administration, this particular proposal was not approved in Washington. Nevertheless, the WPA has continued to look to the American Library Association and to individual library leaders for advice and assistance; and the Association has responded generously whenever its services have been requested. In June, 1935, for example, it prepared for distribution to state WPA officials and potential project sponsors a 54-page guide suggesting minimum specifications for some thirty different types of library project activity.⁹

During 1936 and 1937, and especially after 1938, when Mrs. Florence Kerr was made Assistant WPA Administrator in charge of white-collar and women's activities, efforts were made to coordinate various library service activities undertaken independently as local projects and to integrate them with state-wide plans for library development. In the bibliographical field more ambitious and systematic enterprises were inaugurated. Mending and repair units were raised to a new level of performance; and actual bookbinding, a function usually allocated to commercial binders, was rigidly curtailed. Provision

⁸ American Library Association, "A Federal Emergency Library Project" (Chicago: American Library Association, March 4, 1935). (Mimeographed.)

⁹ American Library Association, "Proposed Work Relief Projects for Individual Libraries or on a State-Wide Basis" (Chicago: American Library Association, June, 1935). (Mimeographed.)

was made for the employment of non-relief professional supervisors for library projects. Limited amounts of federal money were made available for books and for bookmobile rentals as necessary "tools" for library service demonstrations.

Finally, in 1938, a Library Service Section was created within the Professional and Service Division of the WPA, after two different trained librarians had been called to Washington to act as temporary advisers on library projects. The function of this section, according to its director,¹⁰ is to act as a clearing house for all library project operation and to render field services to all state-wide library service projects. In carrying out this function the director collects, tabulates, and interprets uniform reports of project activity, issues bulletins to assist state sponsors and project supervisors to develop sound operating policies and procedures, and holds conferences and training meetings for project supervisors. A considerable amount of travel in the interest of furthering sound project development and increasing co-operation between state supervisors, project sponsors, and state WPA authorities keeps the section staff in close touch with conditions in the field.

The activities of the Library Service Section are described in detail in chapter v. Therefore, at this point it is sufficient to observe that the function of the section is to facilitate the adoption of project plans, policies, and techniques which will contribute most to the increase of permanent tax-supported library service throughout the United States. The steady improvement of project standards, the integration of many independent, locally-sponsored library projects into single state-wide projects, and the redirection of project effort according to sound, long-range objectives since 1938 suggest that the creation of this staff office for library projects in Washington has contributed materially to bring WPA library activities to their present level of development.

Since the creation of the Library Service Section, WPA library projects have been directed increasingly at the extension of library service to areas without public libraries. The out-

¹⁰Edward A. Chapman, formerly Assistant Librarian, Indiana State Library. (Functions described in a letter to the writer August 7, 1941.)

standing achievements of the program, therefore, are to be seen in those communities where free tax-supported library service has come into existence as a result of WPA projects. Unfortunately no accurate tabulation of such "WPA-inaugurated libraries" can be presented, since local support of library service is frequently a question of degree, and because tax support is usually achieved through the co-operative action of numerous forces, of which a WPA library demonstration may be only one. Nevertheless, in many instances WPA projects have been the decisive factors in bringing about this objective. Also, in a few cases a WPA demonstration of library service in rural communities has been followed by the granting of state aid for libraries.¹¹

The building program of the WPA, like the program of the PWA, is of interest to this study primarily in terms of its achievements. Nevertheless, the essential differences between the building programs of these two agencies should be mentioned briefly. The PWA was concerned with "heavy" public works, the WPA with small building projects (usually defined as those costing less than \$50,000 or \$100,000). The PWA constituted a recovery, or "pump-priming" program. The WPA was fundamentally a relief program. The PWA's major function was to finance public works to be built by private contractors. The WPA, on the other hand, financed and operated construction projects itself. Contractors on PWA projects could hire workers without reference to their relief status, while the WPA was required to take 95 per cent of its employees from relief rolls. However, in spite of its limitations in such matters as selection of personnel, the WPA, as an operating agency, was able to exercise much greater control than the PWA over the use of its funds.

The scope of WPA construction affecting libraries is suggested by the following summary statement. By the end of 1940 library construction by this agency totaled over 1,000 completed projects, including 187 new buildings or additions and 814 projects involving the renovation or repair of existing libraries.¹²

¹¹The most noteworthy instances where state aid for libraries has followed WPA library service demonstrations are Arkansas and North Carolina. The former voted to spend \$100,000 for library development for the biennium 1937-39 and has made similar appropriations to continue this aid. North Carolina appropriated \$200,000 for state aid for 1941-43.

¹²U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, 77th

Additional data on these accomplishments appear on pages 86-92, where over-all statistics on library construction under the work program are presented.

Library Activities of the National Youth Administration

The National Youth Administration, or NYA, is one of the categorical forms of public assistance (aid to specific categories of the needy, e.g., the blind, aged, youth) directly financed and administered by the federal government. However, unlike the other categorical allocations, which give aid largely in the form of direct relief, the NYA is essentially a work program. It was established in June, 1935, as a semi-independent unit within the WPA, to develop a program of assistance specifically adapted to the needs of young people from sixteen to twenty-four years of age.¹³ This group, lacking adequate training, maturity, or experience to compete successfully for private employment, and frequently lacking funds with which to obtain necessary education, suffered particularly during the depression.

In 1933 the CCC began to provide for a portion of this group; and the following year the FERA began a program of student aid to assist those enrolled in higher institutions to complete their courses of study. In the same year resident camps for young women were established. These early youth programs produced little activity of concern to this study, however. The CCC developed a minimum provision of library service for the boys in its camps, as a part of its educational program.¹⁴ Also, students receiving FERA aid frequently served as pages, desk attendants, or clerical assistants in college and university libraries. But no library projects per se grew out of assistance to youth until the NYA was established in 1935.

The NYA was originally charged with two functions: to

Cong., 1st sess., Hearings before the Subcommittee of on Appropriations for Work Relief and Relief, fiscal year 1942 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1941), p. 75.

¹³U.S. President, Executive Order 7086, June 26, 1935.

¹⁴Harmon J. Chamberlain, "CCC Libraries," Library Journal, LXIII (April 15, 1938), 299-301.

provide funds for the part-time employment of needy students to enable them to continue their education, and to provide out-of-school youth from relief families with part-time work on useful projects.¹⁵ In 1939, under the President's reorganization bill,¹⁶ the NYA became a unit of the new Federal Security Agency. Its basic functions, however, remained unchanged. Its major subdivisions at that time were entitled Student Aid, Out-of-School Work Projects, Guidance and Placement, and Negro Affairs; but only the first two are of direct importance to this study.

When the NYA was first established in 1935, library leaders felt that it might present a real opportunity to libraries, which were already aware of the problem of unemployed youth. However, when a White House press release suggested that apprentice training for librarianship might be an appropriate field for NYA activity, the American Library Association was quick to observe that such training would be feasible only for subprofessional or clerical positions in the service, and to be effective would require substantial financial provision for the instruction and supervision of apprentice workers.¹⁷ Librarians apparently preferred to limit their contribution to the program to developing such special types of library service as might be useful to youth in relation to regular work or training projects.

In 1936, at the request of NYA authorities, the American Library Association reported to librarians that library service projects, to be operated in co-operation with the Out-of-School Work program, would receive favorable consideration in Washington.¹⁸ Accordingly, largely with a view toward creating useful project activity for rural youth, a few states undertook to es-

¹⁵Palmer O. Johnson and Oswald L. Harvey, The National Youth Administration (Staff Study No. 13 prepared for the Advisory Committee on Education) (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 7.

¹⁶Reorganization Act of 1939, Public No. 19, 76th Cong., 53 U.S. Statutes 561, c. 36. Approved April 3, 1939.

¹⁷John Chancellor, "The National Youth Administration and Libraries," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXIX (October, 1935), 796-98.

¹⁸Grace W. Estes, "Rural Library Service Projects of the National Youth Administration," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXX (October, 1936), 939-41.

tablish library service projects under the NYA. In some instances these enterprises, offering part-time work to youth as library attendants, supplemented existing WPA library service demonstrations. In others, however, they appear to have been undertaken in direct competition with WPA projects.

Little information concerning NYA library projects has appeared in print, either in library periodicals or in publications of the NYA itself. However, short articles have described NYA library programs in two states--New York and Illinois. According to the article on the New York project¹⁹ (actually an informal report on its operation through June, 1936) the NYA had established 54 community libraries in rural areas formerly without public library service. The project was officially sponsored by the state's Library Extension Division. It had a staff of eleven, consisting of a state supervisor and ten district supervisors, of whom two were trained librarians. At that time it was employing 243 needy youths. Space for the newly established libraries was largely donated. The book stock consisted of traveling collections loaned by the Library Extension Division and such gifts as could be obtained from the individual communities.

One of the most ambitious NYA library projects to be undertaken by any state was that developed during 1939-1940 in Illinois.²⁰ This state-wide project was then engaged in a "five-point" program, under which it (1) maintained 60 community reading rooms, (2) operated five bookmobiles serving rural schools, (3) maintained six hospital library units, (4) provided part-time clerical assistants to 200 public libraries, and (5) operated 25 book-mending units. In southern Illinois one unit of the project was also engaged in transcribing books into Braille for the use of the blind. According to a statistical report on this work for 1939²¹ the year closed with 781 youths employed on the project. This figure included 368 assigned to clerical work in public and school libra-

¹⁹Mary F. Mason, "Partial Report on Rural Library Service, March 12-June 15, 1936," New York Libraries, XV (April, 1936), 107-10.

²⁰Loren H. Allen, "NYA in Illinois," Wilson Library Bulletin, XIV (May, 1940), 638-39.

²¹Loren H. Allen, "NYA Library Service," Illinois Libraries, XXII (September, 1940), 60-64.

ries, 272 in mending units, and 44 in community reading rooms and deposit stations.

The peak of employment on all NYA library projects was reached in September, 1938, when they were employing over 6,700 youths.²² Nevertheless, it is clear that the program never achieved the nation-wide scope of the WPA projects. By February, 1941 (the peak month for library employment during the fiscal year 1940-41) one-third of the states had no NYA library projects, and half of the total employment for that month was concentrated in three states, New York, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

On the whole, the character of these NYA library projects is similar to those undertaken during the early days of federal work relief assistance under the FERA. Sponsored by local public libraries or other public bodies, NYA projects usually assist in the regular work of an existing library or establish lending services in communities formerly without any free public library. As under the FERA the responsibility for providing both books and supervision generally rests with the sponsor. Hence, NYA's contribution to the service is largely limited to providing youthful, untrained workers on a part-time basis. Eligible activities for NYA projects include shelf-reading, book preparation, desk service, book renovation, and lending service to isolated communities. Book delivery to hospitals and to individual shut-in persons has also been undertaken by NYA projects in some states.

The object of NYA library projects, according to NYA Administrator Aubrey Williams, is job training through "work experience," to qualify youth for subprofessional employment in libraries, in other distributive occupations, or in the general clerical field.²³ At no time has the program included professional training for library work.

The development of locally-sponsored NYA library work projects has encountered difficulty in some states. For example, where the WPA had already established a state-wide program of library extension with the full co-operation of state library

²² Unless otherwise noted, statements on the extent and nature of NYA library projects are based on information obtained by correspondence with NYA Administrator Aubrey Williams in December, 1941.

²³ Letter from Aubrey Williams, December 1, 1941.

leaders, efforts to introduce local NYA library service often received little encouragement. In some states the WPA has devoted considerable time and money to planning library service demonstrations on an area-wide basis, to building up adequate book collections for this purpose, and to providing professional supervision and in-service training for its workers. Hence, to the WPA and to some library leaders, these NYA projects appeared to be rival or conflicting enterprises, which might seriously threaten the effectiveness of the WPA state-wide program.

Several characteristics of the NYA program suggest that perhaps the establishment of new libraries may be less well suited to its objectives than had appeared to be the case at first. A major difficulty encountered by some NYA library projects has been the development of suitable personnel. In New York, for example, only 8 per cent of the workers on the project had finished high school, and only two of ten district supervisors had had library training.²⁴ Age limitations and the restriction of work to part-time employment both tend to hamper satisfactory operation of this type of project. Finally the dependence upon other library collections and donations from friendly citizen groups for books decreases the likelihood of developing a quality of service—even at a demonstration level—that would inspire permanent public support.

During 1941, in keeping with its policy of emphasizing projects involving skills required by defense industries, the NYA greatly curtailed its activity in the field of library service. By October of that year employment on library projects had decreased 75 per cent from its February peak. By the beginning of 1942 practically all NYA library service projects had been discontinued.

The library activities discussed above are all part of the Out-of-School Work program, but they do not constitute the NYA's sole contribution to library service. In its Student Work Program it has provided school, college, and public libraries with part-time clerks and pages ever since it began, thus taking over a function originally carried by the FERA (see p. 39). During 1941 (according to Aubrey Williams) the NYA provided part-time library work for over 50,000 youths, or approximately 12 per

²⁴Mason, op. cit.

cent of all those participating in the Student Work program. Since reports on the program are not broken down in detail, it is not possible to describe accurately the various kinds of work performed by these students, or to summarize their total accomplishment. However, it is known that in most cases they serve as pages, desk attendants, or general assistants performing routine tasks or working on special cataloging or indexing projects. The importance of the Student Work Program to libraries is that the amount of help which it makes available is substantial, whether considered in the aggregate or from the point of view of the typical small college library to which this aid has become essential in maintaining adequate service.

The final aspect of the NYA program which affects libraries is the construction or manual training phase of its Out-of-School Work Program. In some communities its carpentry shop builds library shelving, charging desks, and other furniture for the use of existing schools or libraries or for use in WPA library demonstrations. In other localities whole library buildings have been constructed or improved as NYA projects. Thus, by July, 1941, the NYA had built 43 new libraries or additions, had repaired almost 350 existing libraries, and had 11 library buildings in progress.

Summary

Chapters ii and iii have traced the evolution of library work relief from 1933 to 1941. They have described how the federal government came to assume certain definite obligations for the relief of the needy as a result of the unemployment emergency of the early nineteen-thirties, and how through various programs they financed and operated projects directly contributing to the improvement of library facilities and the extension of library services throughout the nation. They have shown how library service projects emerged from "fly-by-night" locally-sponsored and unintegrated activities of questionable permanent value into co-ordinated state-wide programs for library development under the WPA. Together, therefore, these two chapters provide a historical background or frame of reference against which the remainder of the study can be more readily understood.

The next chapter, devoted to an analysis and interpreta-

tion of over-all statistics on library project employment, expenditures, and achievement as of June, 1941, supplements the preceding chronological survey and suggests the importance of work relief as a form of federal library aid.

CHAPTER IV

THE SCOPE AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMERGENCY FEDERAL LIBRARY AID

A major purpose of this chapter is to present over-all statistics of employment and expenditures on federally assisted library work projects in the United States. A second--and more important--purpose is to test the general adequacy of the WPA library assistance program by comparing its expenditures by state and region with the distribution of population and with certain other rough measures of need for federal library aid. A third purpose is to summarize the library building activities of the various federal emergency programs and to present data on selected, measurable aspects of library project achievement.

The inadequacy of statistics on library work relief has already been mentioned. However, inasmuch as this chapter purports to present as complete statistics as are available on the quantitative aspects of library project operation, it should be noted again that wholly reliable and complete figures on these activities cannot be segregated before 1937.

The lack of comparable data for this early period may be explained by the relative insignificance of library projects in relation to other types of work relief, and by the fact that the early programs were largely organized and administered at the local level and hence were not reported uniformly. Fortunately, records on WPA library projects have been compiled systematically since 1937. The figures for WPA expenditures on library assistance for the fiscal year 1940-1941, therefore, as presented in this chapter, provide a substantially reliable basis for studying the relative importance of the program as an experiment in federal library aid.

Employment on WPA and NYA Library Projects

Of all the federal agencies which have financed library work relief projects since 1935, only the WPA and the NYA have

kept separate records of employment on this particular type of activity. Even these organizations did not segregate library employment from all other white-collar project records during the first year or two of their existence. This study, therefore, confines its presentation of statistics on library project employment largely to the five-year period from the beginning of 1937 to the end of 1941.

The trend of library project employment through 1941.-- The earliest published statement on WPA library employment, which appeared in 1936, reported a total of 15,301 persons as being engaged in this type of work in February of that year.¹ Official figures on both WPA and NYA library employment through 1941 are presented in Table 2, and the trend is shown graphically in Figure 3. During 1937, according to these data, WPA employment on library projects increased to almost 26,000 persons. In November, 1938, the number of WPA library workers reached an all-time high of 38,324.

By the fall of 1939, as part of a substantial reduction in the entire work program, WPA library employment declined to less than 20,000 workers, or barely one-half the number reported a year before. During the fiscal year 1940-41, in spite of seasonal fluctuations, the library program maintained an average of 25,000 employees. In July, however, greatly reduced WPA appropriations necessitated drastic curtailment of work-relief rolls, with the result that by the end of that month library project employment had dropped to barely 14,000 persons. By the end of 1941 some upward trend appeared to have begun; but after the attack on Pearl Harbor it became increasingly evident that relief employment not contributing more or less directly to the war effort would probably be curtailed even more drastically in the future. In May, 1942, all state-wide WPA library projects were reorganized as WPA War Information Service programs, with greatly reduced personnel.

In summary, the characteristic trend in WPA library employment from 1937 through 1941 has been one of fairly steady increase until November, 1938, and sharp seasonal fluctuations

¹U.S. Works Progress Administration, Report on Progress of the Works Program (Washington: Works Progress Administration, May 15, 1936), p. 20. (Planographed.)

TABLE 2

EMPLOYMENT ON WPA AND NYA LIBRARY WORK PROJECTS
1937-1941^a

Date	Number of Persons					Date	Number of Persons		
	WPA			NYA	Total		WPA	NYA	Total
	Total	Lib. Service	Book Repair						
<u>1937</u>						<u>1940</u>			
Jan.	21,722	14,168	7,554	.....	.....	Jan.	29,007	5,954	34,961
Feb.	22,221	14,293	7,928	7,359	29,580	Feb.	29,848	6,430	36,278
Mar.	23,146	14,569	8,577	.....	.....	Mar.	29,723	6,489	36,212
Apr.	24,447	15,457	8,990	5,962	30,409	Apr.	27,984	6,537	34,521
May	25,289	16,127	9,162	.....	.....	May	26,351	5,605	31,956
June	25,717	17,076	8,641	8,878	34,595	June	21,673	4,669	26,342
July	24,457	16,071	8,386	.....	.....	July	22,705	3,641	26,346
Aug.	23,188	14,841	8,347	.....	.....	Aug.	23,007	3,852	26,859
Sept.	23,728	15,614	8,114	.....	.....	Sept.	23,854	3,704	27,558
Oct.	24,739	16,636	8,103	.....	.....	Oct.	25,935	3,566	29,501
Nov.	25,702	17,217	8,485	6,286	31,988	Nov.	26,642	3,659	30,301
Dec.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Dec.	27,290	4,052	31,342
<u>1938</u>						<u>1941</u>			
Jan.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Jan.	27,647	4,808	32,455
Feb.	26,868	16,415	10,453	.....	.....	Feb.	27,506	5,521	33,127
Mar.	29,756	18,048	11,708	6,107	35,863	Mar.	25,192	4,731	29,923
Apr.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Apr.	22,539	3,793	26,332
May	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	May	22,245	3,271	25,516
June	33,677	18,799	14,878	6,677	40,354	June	21,723	2,912	24,635
July	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	July	14,363	1,727	16,090
Aug.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Aug.	15,115	1,455	16,570
Sept.	36,882	21,619	15,263	6,743	43,625	Sept.	15,556	1,565	17,121
Oct.	38,018	24,866	13,153	.....	.....	Oct.	16,564	1,457	18,021
Nov.	38,324	25,628	12,696	.....	.....	Nov.	16,747	1,684	18,431
Dec.	36,083	24,428	11,655	6,615	42,698	Dec.	16,717	1,798	18,515
<u>1939</u>									
Jan.	34,702	23,842	10,860	.....	.....		
Feb.	35,129	24,414	10,715	.....	.....		
Mar.	35,952	25,174	10,778	6,447	42,399				
Apr.	34,454	24,337	10,117	.....	.....		
May	31,031	23,152	7,879	.....	.....		
June	29,112	23,226	5,886	.....	.....		
July	27,175	21,738	5,437	4,224	31,399				
Aug.	22,260	17,808	4,452	4,251	26,511				
Sept.	19,578	16,167	3,411	4,448	24,026				
Oct.	21,570	(b)	(b)	4,645	26,215				
Nov.	24,978	(b)	(b)	5,207	30,185				
Dec.	26,825	(b)	(b)	5,803	32,628				

^aSource: Data supplied by the Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration.

^bAfter September, 1939, separate reports were not compiled for Library Service and Book Repair projects.

K E Y

Library employment on the NYA
Out-of-School Work Program

Total WPA library project em-
ployment before Sept., 1939

WPA book repair employment
before Sept., 1939

WPA library service employ-
ment (including book repair)
after Sept., 1939

Thousands
of workers

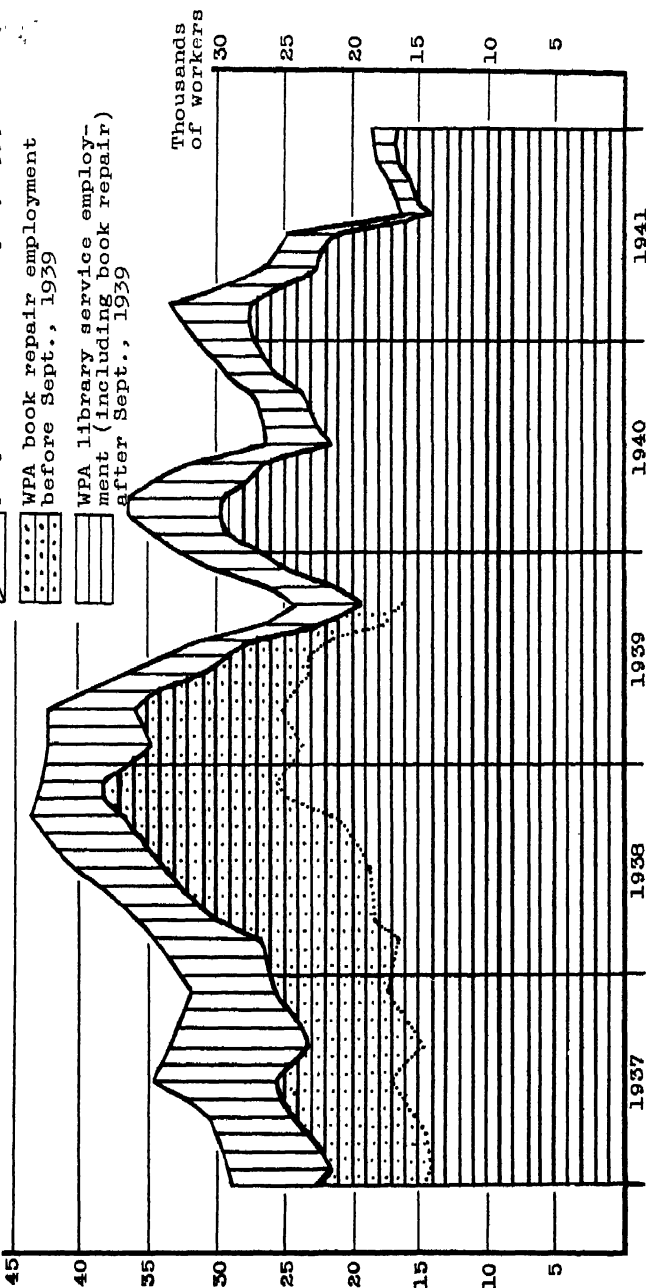


Fig. 3.--Employment trend on WPA library projects and on library projects of the NYA Out-of-School Work Program, 1937-1941.*

*Source: Data supplied by the WPA and the NYA.

(high in late winter and low in summer) until July, 1941, when the entire program was reduced to barely one-third of its highest employment peak.

Kinds of work and kinds of workers.—The available data on WPA library employment cannot be broken down in terms of kinds and amounts of service which they represent. Nor do they provide much information concerning the characteristics of the workers employed on library projects. There are, however, a few distinctions among the data which can be made; and these are presented for such light as they may throw on the character of the program as a whole.

It is known, for example, that in 1937 approximately one-third of all WPA library employees were engaged in book repair work, and that by the middle of 1938 this proportion had increased to almost 45 per cent (see Table 2 and Fig. 3). It is also known that by September, 1939, this ratio had fallen to barely 17 per cent, owing to the rigid curtailment of bookbinding and the repair of school textbooks by library project workers. The administration of book mending as a "staff" function of state-wide WPA library projects since 1939 makes it impossible to estimate accurately the proportion of workers engaged in this work during 1940 and 1941.

Other types of work represented by these employment data cannot be broken down into separate categories. However, in any given state they may include ordering, cataloging, or preparing books for circulation, distributing them to lending units, operating bookmobiles and community reading rooms, transcribing books into Braille, and assisting regular libraries in special tasks designed to expand their available services.

Not all WPA activity which might be designated as library work is included in the foregoing statistics. "Library project workers," as defined in this study, refers only to persons employed on regularly sponsored library projects, assisting existing library agencies or establishing library service in new areas. In other words, it does not include workers on Museum, Education, Recreation, Writing, Research, and Public Records projects, nor those on the Historical Records Survey. Some of these projects make extensive use of libraries. Some of them involve indexing or bibliographical tasks that might easily be considered as library work. A few even maintain library service to facilitate

project operation. None of these undertakings, however, are administratively a part of the WPA library assistance program. They are separately sponsored, separately reported, and hence are not included in the statistics on library work relief.

The only breakdowns of WPA employment statistics which divide library workers into groups are those by sex and administrative or payroll status. Thus, as is shown by Table 3, library

TABLE 3

EMPLOYMENT ON PROJECTS UNDER THE DIVISION
OF COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS, BY PROGRAM,
TYPE OF PROJECT, AND SEX, MARCH, 1941^a

Program and Type of Project	Number of Persons			Per Cent of Total	Per Cent Male
	Male	Female	Total		
Public Activities Programs					
Education.....	10,320	16,899	27,219	6.0	37.9
Recreation.....	21,210	13,149	34,359	7.6	61.7
LIBRARY.....	4,929	20,263	25,192	5.5	19.6
Museum.....	3,442	2,078	5,520	1.2	62.3
Art.....	4,457	1,671	6,128	1.3	72.7
Music.....	7,907	1,763	9,670	2.1	81.8
Writing.....	2,048	1,499	3,547	0.8	57.7
Total.....	54,313	57,322	111,635	24.5	48.6
Research and Records Prog..					
Research and Surveys....	19,259	8,553	27,812	6.1	69.2
Public Records.....	17,322	11,927	29,249	6.4	59.2
Hist. Records Survey....	4,287	3,414	7,701	1.7	55.7
Total.....	40,868	23,894	64,762	14.2	63.1
Welfare Programs					
Public Health and					
Hospital.....	4,426	9,711	14,137	3.1	31.3
Sewing.....	6,403	108,160	114,563	25.2	5.6
Production (except sewing)	7,215	6,762	13,977	3.1	51.6
Housekeeping Aides.....	355	35,723	36,078	7.9	1.0
Household Workers					
Training.....	77	708	785	0.2	9.8
School Lunches.....	10,189	54,109	64,298	14.1	15.8
Surplus Commodity Dis- tribution.....	19,930	4,387	24,317	5.4	81.9
Total.....	48,595	219,560	268,155	59.0	18.1
Other Programs.....	4,540	5,856	10,396	2.3	43.7
Total for the Division of Community Service Programs.....	148,316	306,632	454,948	100.0	32.4

^aSource: U.S. Work Projects Administration, Statistical Summary of WPA Community Service Programs, March, 1941 (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1941), p. 2.

projects, with a personnel that is less than 20 per cent male, comprise one of the few WPA activities that are essentially feminine. Only four other programs (Sewing, Housekeeping Aides, Household Workers' Training, and School Lunches) have a smaller proportion of men. The personnel of all WPA projects averages more than 80 per cent men.

The breakdown by administrative or wage status merely distinguishes between the "project wage" (relief workers) and "project supervisory" groups. In March, 1941, with a total personnel of over 25,000, only 965, or 3.8 per cent, of the employees on WPA library projects were classed as "project supervisory" (see Table 4). Of these 965 probably not more than two or three hundred had had previous professional library training and experience.

The library program's ratio of "supervisory" employees to its total employment is much smaller than that of other Public Activities Programs. Music and Art projects, for example, each had more than 5 per cent of supervisory employees. Recreation and Education projects had 5.8 and 6 per cent respectively; and Writing projects had 7.2 per cent. The proportion of supervisory employees on all WPA projects at this time was 4.1 per cent.²

Employment data, by state, March, 1941.—The distribution of WPA library project employment among the states and certain employment relationships within each state are presented in Table 4. This table, in which the states are arranged according to the total number of persons employed on library projects, shows clearly the extent to which employment on this type of work relief was concentrated in certain of the larger states during the month of March, 1941.

Three states, according to this table, then had more than 2,000 WPA library workers each. Twelve had from one to one hundred. Two had none at all. More important, however, is the fact that well over half of the total personnel on library projects was concentrated in the nine states³ employing more than 1,000

²U.S. Work Projects Administration, Statistical Summary of WPA Community Service Programs, March, 1941 (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1941), p. 4.

³Texas, Illinois, Ohio, California, North Carolina, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Minnesota, and New York.

TABLE 4

EMPLOYMENT ON WPA LIBRARY PROJECTS BY STATE, IN RELATION TO
EMPLOYMENT ON COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS
AND TO TOTAL WPA EMPLOYMENT, MARCH, 1941^a

State	WPA Library Project Personnel					
	Total No. of Persons Employed	Number in Each Wage Status ^b		As Per Cent of Employment		
		Project Wage	Project Supervisory		On Community Service Programs	On All WPA Projects
			Num- ber	Per Cent		
Tex.	2,178	2,102	76	3.5	7.2	2.3
Ill.	2,033	1,961	72	3.5	5.6	1.7
Ohio	2,030	1,946	84	4.1	8.7	2.1
Calif. ..	1,474	1,415	59	4.0	5.7	2.0
N.C.	1,371	1,311	60	4.4	11.8	3.3
Mass.	1,186	1,145	41	3.5	4.9	1.7
N.J.	1,180	1,139	41	3.5	7.8	2.2
Minn.	1,046	1,019	27	2.6	10.5	2.3
N.Y.	1,044	1,027	17	1.6	2.9	0.8
Wis.	816	791	25	3.1	8.4	2.0
Ga.	752	716	36	4.8	6.7	2.0
Mich.	733	701	32	4.4	4.2	1.1
S.C.	688	656	32	4.7	8.5	2.2
Okla.	645	617	28	4.3	5.1	1.6
Ind.	637	620	17	2.7	6.6	1.5
La.	625	585	40	6.4	8.6	2.0
Miss.	594	566	28	4.7	5.6	1.7
Ky.	591	567	24	4.1	8.4	1.6
Ala.	523	498	25	4.8	5.8	1.4
Mo.	505	490	15	3.0	3.5	0.9
Pa.	464	444	20	4.3	1.5	0.4
W.Va.	422	410	12	2.8	6.8	1.3
Fla.	392	371	21	5.4	4.8	1.3
Neb.	358	348	10	2.8	6.4	1.5
Ark.	307	291	16	5.2	4.1	0.9
Kan.	304	289	15	4.9	5.0	1.2
Colo.	261	250	11	4.2	5.5	1.3
Tenn.	258	249	9	3.5	3.9	0.8
Wash.	250	238	12	4.8	5.5	1.1
Va.	240	227	13	5.4	3.6	1.1
Ia.	192	187	5	2.6	3.7	0.8
Md.	160	155	5	3.1	8.8	1.5
N.D.	122	119	3	2.5	5.7	1.0
S.D.	110	108	2	1.8	3.7	0.9
Ore.	108	105	3	2.8	4.9	0.9
Conn.	100	99	1	1.0	3.3	0.9
Vt.	93	91	2	2.2	7.0	2.4
R.I.	88	86	2	2.3	3.4	1.0
Mont.	83	80	3	3.6	3.1	0.8
D.C.	78	61	17	21.8	2.4	0.8
Ariz.	62	59	3	4.8	5.3	1.0

TABLE 4--Continued

State	WPA Library Project Personnel					
	Total No. of Persons Employed	Number in Each Wage Status ^b		As Per Cent of Employment		
		Project Wage	Project Supervisory		On Community Service Programs	On All WPA Projects
			Num- ber	Per Cent		
N.H.	27	27	0	0.0	2.0	0.5
Ida.	24	24	0	0.0	2.1	0.2
Wyo.	14	14	0	0.0	1.5	0.5
N.M.	4	4	0	0.0	0.2	0.03
Me.	2	2	0	0.0	0.1	0.02
Nev.	1	0	1	100.0	0.2	0.1
Del.	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Utah	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	25,175	24,210	965	3.8	5.5	1.5

^aThe data for this table were supplied by the Statistical Division of the WPA.

^bWage Status refers to the two WPA payroll classifications: "Project Wage" (relief workers) and "Project Supervisory" (non-relief supervisory or administrative employees).

persons on library work relief.

With minor exceptions, library project employment appears to have been distributed in accord with the total population of the individual states. How closely this pattern was followed is suggested by the fact that a rank order relationship of +.9045 exists between this distribution of library project employment and the population of the various states, according to the 1940 census.⁴

Minnesota (18th in population but 8th in the number of its library project employees) and South Carolina (26th in population but 13th in library project employment) are the outstanding examples of states with more project assistance than they

⁴All rank order correlations in this study are based on the Spearman formula: $\rho = 1 - \frac{\sum (D^2)}{N(N^2 - 1)}$, where ρ is the coefficient of correlation, D is the difference between the ranks of each state on the two groups of data, and N is the number of states. Herbert Arkin and Raymond R. Colton, An Outline of Statistical Methods (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1938), p. 68.

would have received on a strict population basis.

Pennsylvania (2d in population but 21st in number of library project employees) and Tennessee (15th in population but 28th in library project employment) are the two states with the smallest number of workers in proportion to their populations.

Three other categories of data in Table 4 provide additional rough measures of the relative importance or strength of the library assistance program in the various states. They are the ratio of supervisors to total project personnel, and the ratios of library project employment to the total employment on Community Service Programs activities, and to the total employment on all WPA projects.

It has been noted that in March, 1941, 3.8 per cent of the employees of the library program were working in supervisory, non-relief capacities. In individual states this proportion generally ranged from 2.5 to 5 per cent, with a few exceptions caused by peculiar local conditions.

The Division of Community Service Programs is a WPA administrative unit embracing such cultural and domestic projects as Education, Recreation, Museum, Art, Music, Writing, Research and Records, Sewing, School Lunches, and Training Housekeeping Aides. Since each state director of this division has considerable power over the development of all of these activities, the ratio of library project employment to the total employment in this division provides a rough measure of the relative emphasis given to the library program in any state. For the nation as a whole library projects accounted for 5.5 per cent of all employment on Community Service Programs in March, 1941. In individual states this proportion ranged from zero in two states without library projects to 10.5 per cent in Minnesota and 11.8 per cent in North Carolina.

The ratio of library project employment to total WPA employment during the month selected for analysis was 1.5 per cent for the nation. Among individual states it ranged from zero to 3.3 per cent, with North Carolina again the high state.

Library employment under the NYA.--Library employment supported by the National Youth Administration was carried on under two distinct part-time work programs, the "Out-of-School Work Program" and the "Student Work Program." Separate records on library employment are kept only for the Out-of-School Work

Program. These figures appear in Table 2 (p. 48).

According to these reports, NYA library project employment under the Out-of-School Work Program reached its all-time peak of 8,878 during 1937.⁵ During 1938 this program had an average employment of 6,500 youth. In 1939 and 1940 its personnel fluctuated with the seasonal need from 3,500 to 6,500 workers. In 1941, however, as the NYA began to expand its program of training for defense industries, it rapidly restricted its library activities, so that by August barely 1,400 library project employees were left. By the end of the year there were indications that, like the WPA, the NYA might have to reorient its entire program around the war effort, if its existence were to be continued.

The distribution among the states of employment on NYA Out-of-School library projects has been extremely uneven. For example, in February, the peak month for such employment in 1941, one-third of the states had no NYA library employees at all, and over one-half of the total personnel of 5,521 was centered in New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Missouri. New York alone had 1,340 youths engaged in this part-time library work during that month.

Unfortunately, separate records have not been kept to show the extent of library service rendered by participants in the NYA's Student Work Program. According to an official estimate based on a sampling of the entire personnel of this program, over 57,000 individuals were performing part-time library work under its auspices during February, 1941.⁶

Summary on library project employment.--The true magnitude of library project employment is perhaps best understood when the aggregate data of Table 2 are related to the nation's total library personnel.

Before the inauguration of federal work programs there were approximately 30,000 "Librarians and Library Assistants" in

⁵ All data on NYA library employment was obtained through direct correspondence with the Director of the organization.

⁶ Letter from Aubrey Williams, NYA Administrator, December 1, 1941.

the United States.⁷ (This figure is probably somewhat low, but is the best estimate available.) At the peak of its expansion the WPA alone was employing a total of 38,324 full-time persons on library and book repair projects; and at their peak NYA Out-of-School library work projects were employing almost 9,000 youth on a part-time basis. When to these workers the more than 50,000 part-time NYA student library assistants are added, some conception is gained of the tremendous increase in personnel and man-hours of library work which these programs have made possible. In spite of seasonal fluctuations and in spite of the ambiguity of the phrase "part-time" as applied to NYA youth, it seems entirely safe to say that one effect of the various federal work programs has been to more than double the number of persons engaged (either part- or full-time) in library work in the United States.

Expenditures on WPA Library Projects

The scope and quality of any public service is usually directly associated with the amount of money applied to its development. Statistics on the total cost of WPA library assistance, therefore, provide a useful means of determining the relative importance of this program to the extension and improvement of the nation's library facilities and services.

The next four sections of this chapter are devoted to the presentation and interpretation of expenditures on WPA library projects as of the end of the fiscal year 1940-1941. The first section deals with the total expenditures on the program through June, 1941. A second section treats the cost of project activity by states during the year 1940-41. A third section discusses the distribution of WPA expenditures on library projects among the states in 1940-41 in relation to other factors associated with relative need. The fourth section treats regional differences in the distribution of WPA library assistance on a similar basis and summarizes the importance of these federal expenditures to national library development.

⁷U.S. Office of Education, Statistics of Public, Society, and School Libraries, 1929, Bulletin 1930, No. 37 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931), p. 8; also U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. V (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 20.

Total Expenditures through June, 1941

Table 5 presents over-all statistics on the cost of WPA library project operation through June, 1941. It shows, in separate columns, not only the total cumulated cost of the program up to this date, but also its annual operating expenditures during each of the two preceding years. In its four horizontal divisions this table also indicates for each period the distribution of total project costs by "source" and "object" of expenditure.

Before turning to the data themselves, the term "source" and "object"--the basic categories for statistical breakdowns of project expenditures--require brief definition. The "source" of funds refers to the agencies, organizations, or public bodies from which the amounts reported as expenditures have been obtained. The two "sources" of funds for the operation of work relief projects are "federal" or "WPA," and "sponsor." The meaning of the former designation is obvious. The latter refers to the "sponsor's contribution," which consists of (1) funds applied to project use by state or local governments, library authorities, or interested organizations, and (2) assigned values of non-cash contributions to project operation, such as supervision, office space, materials, library quarters, and the use of books owned by the sponsor.

Project expenditures are subdivided by "object" to show roughly how they have been spent. Since the WPA is primarily concerned with creating employment, the two "objects" between which it divides all project costs are "labor" and "non-labor." It uses these breakdowns by object to determine which of its various programs creates the most useful employment with the least expenditure of federal funds for non-labor purposes. In contrast with construction projects library activities and other Community Service programs rank very high in this regard.

The total cost of WPA library work relief through June, 1941, was nearly \$120,000,000, according to the third entry in column (6) of Table 5. In terms of federal aid, however, the fact that the WPA alone spent almost \$100,000,000 on this program is the most important single item reported by this table. Similarly, the fact that during each of the previous two years it spent close to \$19,000,000 on library assistance activities

TABLE 5

COST OF WPA LIBRARY PROJECTS BY SOURCE OF FUNDS
AND OBJECT OF EXPENDITURE^a

Source or Object (1)	Year Ending June 30, 1940		Year Ending June 30, 1941		1935-1941 Cumulative	
	Amount in Dollars (2)	Per Cent (3)	Amount in Dollars (4)	Per Cent (5)	Amount in Dollars (6)	Per Cent (7)
Total cost by source						
WPA.....	18,752,000	79.9	18,856,547	72.2	97,350,465	82.8
Sponsor.....	4,709,000	20.1	7,249,571	27.8	20,183,734	17.2
Total.....	23,461,000	100.0	26,106,118	100.0	117,534,199	100.0
WPA expenditures by object						
Labor.....	18,248,000	97.3	18,288,402	97.0	95,178,367	97.8
Non-labor.....	504,000	2.7	568,145	3.0	2,172,098	2.2
Total.....	18,752,000	100.0	18,856,547	100.0	97,350,465	100.0
Sponsor's contribution						
by object						
Labor.....	1,454,000	30.9	1,326,498	18.3	5,360,272	26.5
Non-labor.....	3,255,000	69.1	5,923,073	81.7	14,823,462	73.5
Total.....	4,709,000	100.0	7,249,571	100.0	20,183,734	100.0
Total expenditures						
by object						
Labor.....	19,702,000	77.8	19,614,900	75.1	100,538,639	85.5
Non-labor.....	3,759,000	22.2	6,491,218	24.9	16,995,560	14.5
Total.....	23,461,000	100.0	26,106,118	100.0	117,534,199	100.0

^aSources: Data for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, was obtained from U.S. Federal Works Agency, First Annual Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1940 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 435. Data for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1941, was obtained from the same agency's annual report for that year, p. 450. The cumulative data were supplied by the Division of Statistics of the Work Projects Administration.

suggests the importance of WPA aid as a factor in nation-wide library development, since this amount is almost 40 per cent of the sum regularly spent in support of public library service in the United States.⁸

Compared with the total expenditure of the WPA for all types of projects, \$19,000,000 is admittedly not an impressive figure. Actually, it represents barely 1.5 per cent of all WPA expenditures during the year 1940-41. However, in relation to two known facts, (1) that over half of the nation's total public library support was concentrated in the ninety-odd cities of over 100,000 inhabitants⁹ and a large share of the remainder was spent in smaller cities and towns, and (2) that at the same time less than 3,500,000 urban dwellers were without access to libraries, while more than 38,000,000 rural residents still had no public library service,¹⁰ it is quite possible that, with its known emphasis on service to rural areas, the WPA program has more than doubled the amount of money normally spent on rural library service in the United States.

The breakdown of project expenditures by source reveals that from the beginning WPA funds have constituted almost 83 per cent of the total cost of the program, according to column (7) in Table 5. The ratios for the two preceding years, presented in columns (3) and (5), show that, owing to a marked increase in the sponsor's contribution, the WPA's share of the cost was only slightly more than 72 per cent in 1940-41. In other words, it appears that state and local participation is becoming increasingly important in the development of project-assisted services.

The remainder of Table 5 shows the breakdown of project expenditures by object. It indicates that the WPA has consistently spent at least 97 per cent of its funds for labor, although this proportion is slightly less than its average from 1935 to 1941. In 1941 the various project sponsors, by greatly increas-

⁸In 1938 the nation spent \$51,594,137 on public library service, according to statistics published in the ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

⁹U.S. Bureau of the Census, Financial Statistics of Cities over 100,000 Population, 1938 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1941).

¹⁰ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

ing their contributions to non-labor costs of operation, reduced the labor portion of their participation from almost 31 per cent to barely 18 per cent. In other words, by this time the sponsors were devoting more than 80 per cent of their contributions to books, quarters, equipment, and supplies needed for project operation.

The trend indicated by the entire table is one of increasing non-federal participation and a notable development toward a more normal balance between labor and non-labor costs of service.

Expenditures for 1940-41, by State

This section presents statistics on the total and per capita amounts of WPA funds spent on library activities in each state in 1940-41.

Total library project expenditures.—Table 6 reports the total cost of library project operation in 1940-41 by source of funds. Its arrangement, in order of amounts of federal funds spent in each state, readily reveals which states benefited most (in gross amounts) from WPA library assistance in that year. This table also indicates for each state what proportion of the total operating cost was borne (as "sponsor's contribution") by non-federal agencies. Finally, it shows, by state, the relative importance of library activity in relation to other Community Service projects and in relation to the entire WPA program.

Column (2) shows clearly just how WPA library expenditures were distributed among the states in 1940-41.¹¹ The range in amounts received by individual states is from \$1,858,314 (for Ohio) down to \$700 (for Delaware). The median amount is approximately \$250,000.

The fact that over one-third of the total federal expenditure on library projects went to five states (Ohio, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey, and California), which received over \$1,000,000, while more than one-third of the states received less than one-tenth of that amount, suggests the extent to which the large benefits of the program have been concentrated. It is of

¹¹The total amount reported in column (2) is slightly less than the total reported in Table 5 because Table 6 includes only the continental United States.

TABLE 6

EXPENDITURES ON WPA LIBRARY PROJECTS BY SOURCE AND STATE, RELATED TO
WPA EXPENDITURES ON COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS AND TO TOTAL WPA
EXPENDITURES DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 1940-41^a

State (1)	WPA Library Project Expenditures			Per Cent Ratios ^b		
	WPA Funds (2)	Sponsor's Contribution (3)	Total Project Cost (4)	Sponsor's to Total Cost (5)	WPA Funds to Community Service Programs (6)	WPA Funds to Total WPA Expend- itures (7)
Ohio.....	\$ 1,858,314	\$ 619,629	\$ 2,477,943	25.0	10.0	2.4
Illinois.....	1,882,997	665,416	2,548,413	28.2	5.7	1.9
Texas.....	1,800,265	295,092	1,595,357	18.5	7.8	2.8
New Jersey.....	1,166,657	470,564	1,637,221	28.7	8.6	2.6
California.....	1,146,841	278,401	1,425,242	19.5	4.9	1.8
Massachusetts.....	983,955	200,810	1,184,765	16.9	5.2	1.8
North Carolina.....	790,810	1,122,424	1,913,234	58.7	13.1	3.4
Minnesota.....	786,590	187,282	973,872	19.2	10.1	2.6
New York.....	767,142	72,823	839,965	8.7	2.4	0.7
Michigan.....	592,610	391,694	974,304	40.2	4.4	1.2
Wisconsin.....	565,974	138,301	704,275	19.6	6.9	1.8
Louisiana.....	500,555	250,016	750,571	33.3	10.0	2.7
South Carolina.....	478,118	285,586	763,704	37.4	10.3	2.3
Georgia.....	473,873	197,060	670,933	29.4	7.1	2.1
Indiana.....	433,299	137,165	570,464	24.0	6.3	1.4
Oklahoma.....	424,440	103,659	528,099	19.6	5.8	1.9
Virginia.....	360,655	124,425	485,080	25.6	8.1	2.8
Kentucky.....	357,868	149,356	507,224	29.4	7.6	1.6
Pennsylvania.....	349,611	168,770	508,381	31.2	1.4	0.3
Missouri.....	341,707	144,341	486,048	29.7	3.3	0.8
Mississippi.....	323,168	115,790	438,958	26.4	6.1	1.7
Florida.....	319,563	96,959	416,522	23.3	5.5	1.4

Alabama.....	316,890	103,782	420,672	24.7	5.6	1.4
West Virginia.....	276,109	215,261	491,370	43.8	6.9	1.3
Nebraska.....	248,670	70,700	319,370	22.1	6.6	1.6
Washington.....	239,101	81,129	320,230	25.3	6.0	1.3
Arkansas.....	201,392	100,335	302,327	33.4	5.2	1.1
Iowa.....	189,381	20,507	209,888	9.8	5.0	1.2
Kansas.....	186,725	81,840	268,565	30.5	5.0	1.2
Colorado.....	170,964	46,929	217,893	21.5	4.9	1.2
Tennessee.....	144,203	42,313	186,516	22.7	3.9	0.7
Maryland.....	133,866	43,180	177,046	24.4	8.8	1.6
Dist. of Columbia..	96,621	7,242	103,863	7.0	3.4	1.2
Oregon.....	86,875	16,543	103,418	16.0	4.3	0.9
Connecticut.....	80,918	4,383	85,301	5.1	2.8	0.7
Rhode Island.....	79,059	47,183	126,242	37.4	3.6	1.0
Montana.....	75,068	27,103	102,171	26.5	3.3	1.0
South Dakota.....	72,026	22,069	94,095	23.4	3.8	1.0
North Dakota.....	61,847	24,288	86,135	28.2	4.0	0.8
Vermont.....	60,641	22,891	83,532	27.4	7.0	2.4
Arizona.....	39,396	22,291	61,687	36.1	4.5	0.7
Nevada.....	21,197	13,190	34,387	39.3	4.8	1.7
New Hampshire.....	17,448	5,328	22,776	23.4	1.8	0.4
Idaho.....	15,699	2,674	18,373	14.5	2.1	0.3
New Mexico.....	13,319	4,218	17,537	24.0	1.1	0.2
Wyoming.....	9,303	3,053	12,356	24.7	1.4	0.5
Utah.....	2,887	0	2,887	0.0	0.2	0.04
Maine.....	940	102	1,042	9.8	0.1	0.01
Delaware.....	700	7,256	7,956	91.2	0.1	0.03
Total.....	\$18,846,257	\$7,241,953	\$26,088,210	27.8	5.6	1.2

^aSource: Data obtained from WPA's Division of Statistics in Washington.

^bColumn (5) should read: "Ratio of Sponsor's Contribution to Total Library Project Cost."
 Column (6): "Ratio of WPA Expenditures on Library Projects to WPA Expenditures on All Community Service Programs." Column (7): "Ratio of WPA Expenditures on Library Projects to Total WPA Expenditures on All Projects."

interest, however, to note that half of the states did receive more than \$250,000, a sum which, added to existing library revenues, would constitute a substantial contribution toward the support of an adequate program of library service for the entire state in a number of instances.

The geographical distribution¹² of WPA expenditures on library projects during 1940-41, by state, is shown graphically on a map of the United States, in Figure 4, which requires little interpretation. It clearly reveals which of the larger and more heavily populated states received the most assistance from the WPA library program and which other states received relatively little.

Columns (3) and (5) in Table 6 show the relative size and importance of state and local participation in the cost of project operation in each state. The amounts reported, which range upwards to over \$1,000,000 (in the case of North Carolina) include both cash expenditures and assigned values of other contributions of the various project sponsors. The total amount of the sponsor's contribution to WPA library projects during 1940-41 was almost \$7,241,953.

Since the sponsor's contribution consists largely of "new" money (funds not previously available for library support) and the application of existing book resources and other facilities to newly established services, column (3) comprises in a sense a measure of the "stimulation" effect of the WPA library assistance program among the different states.

Two facts stand out in this tabulation of contributions by state-wide project sponsors. First, in spite of the wide range in amounts reported for individual states, it appears that in almost half of them the sponsor's contribution for the year exceeded \$100,000. Second, in two states (North Carolina and

¹²It should be pointed out once again that while this study speaks of the "distribution" of WPA library funds, it refers only to that portion of each state's total WPA expenditure which went toward the support of its library project activities. There never has been a "WPA library project fund" for apportioning library assistance to individual states. All mention of project expenditures as "federal aid" therefore, refers merely to the effect of such expenditures from the point of view of library development, not to any intent on the part of the WPA to apportion any of its funds as federal aid to libraries.

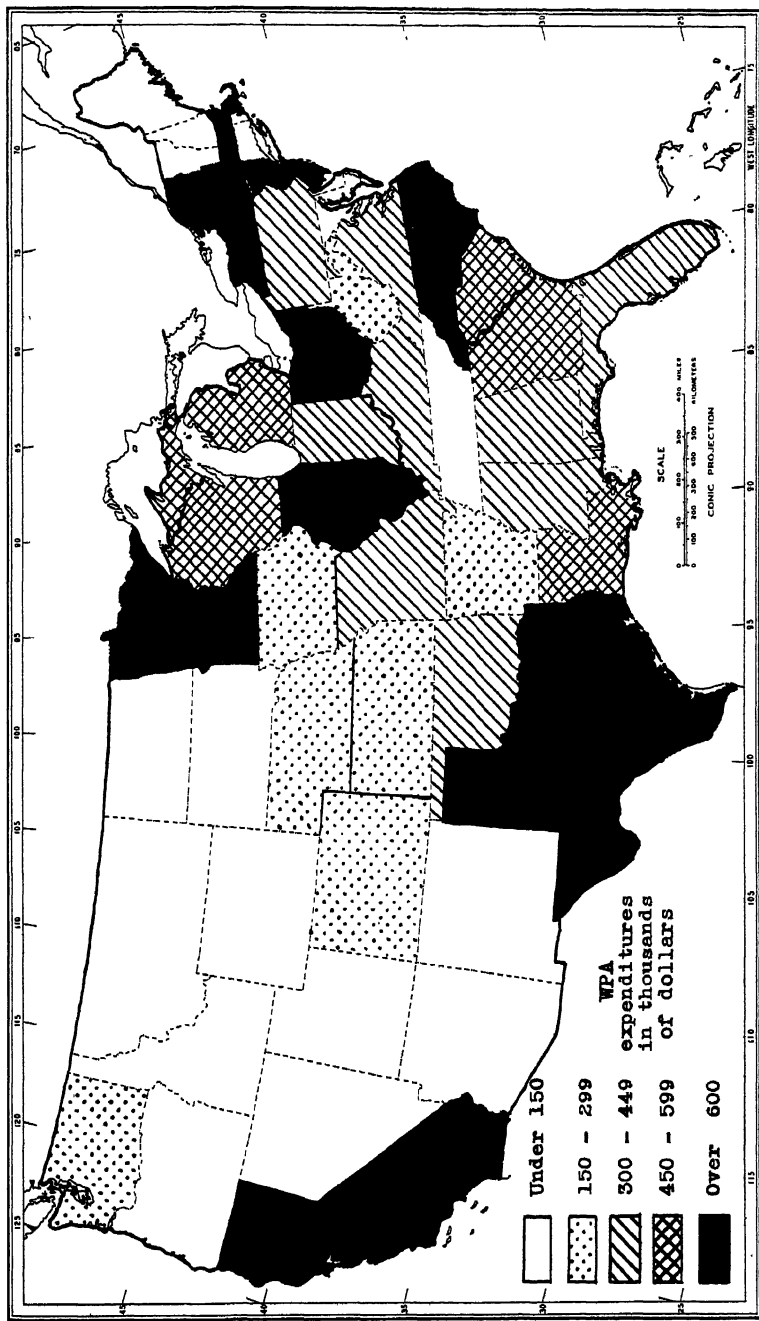


Fig. 4.--WPA expenditures on library projects during 1940-41*

*Source: This map is based on the data on column (2) of Table 6. From Goode's Series of Base Maps (The University of Chicago Press).

Delaware) the non-federal contributions were greater than that of the WPA itself.

Column (5) shows that half of the states contributed at least 25 per cent of the total cost to the support of their respective WPA-assisted library work programs. In four states this proportion amounted to more than 40 per cent.

The total cost of library project operation for the year appears in column (4). Interestingly enough, the entire program for the year 1940-41 cost slightly more than \$26,000,000, or almost exactly half of the amount normally spent throughout the nation in support of public libraries.¹³ The range in the cost of individual state-wide projects is from a high of almost \$2,500,000 (Ohio) to barely \$1,000 (Maine). The median for the group is \$320,230.

Columns (6) and (7) provide a measure of the relative importance of library activity as a form of work relief in the various states. Since the power of emphasizing or limiting this type of enterprise in relation to other white-collar projects rests largely with State WPA Administrators, the data in these columns are clearly indicative of the extent to which the states differ in their support of this particular kind of relief work.

In five states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Minnesota, and Ohio) library projects accounted for more than 10 per cent of all WPA expenditures on Community Service Programs. Throughout the nation this ratio was only 5.6 per cent in 1940-41.

Column (7) shows the ratio of library project expenditures to the total expenditures of the WPA in each state. For the whole United States library services used only 1.2 per cent of all WPA funds spent for work relief in 1940-41. In individual states, however, the library ratio ranged from barely one-tenth of 1 per cent to as high as 3.4 per cent. In six states (North Carolina, Virginia, Texas, Louisiana, New Jersey, and Minnesota) library projects received more than 2.5 per cent of all WPA funds. Oddly enough, three of these states are not among those whose library project expenditures rank highest in relation to other Community Service projects.

Per capita expenditures of WPA funds.--In the foregoing

¹³ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

portion of this section the distribution of WPA library aid has been discussed solely in terms of gross amounts. For the purpose of studying comparisons in relative benefits received by the various states, per capita amounts constitute a more useful measure. Table 7, therefore, presents, in rank order, the per capita expenditures of WPA funds for library project activity in each

TABLE 7

PER CAPITA WPA EXPENDITURES ON LIBRARY PROJECTS
DURING THE FISCAL YEAR 1940-1941^a

State	Amount ^b	State	Amount ^b
Minnesota.....	\$.28	Kentucky.....	\$.12
New Jersey.....	.38	South Dakota..	.11
Ohio.....	.27	Alabama.....	.11
South Carolina..	.25	Michigan.....	.11
Massachusetts..	.23	Rhode Island..	.11
North Carolina..	.22	Kansas.....	.10
Illinois.....	.21	Arkansas.....	.10
Louisiana.....	.21	North Dakota..	.10
Texas.....	.20	Missouri.....	.09
Nevada.....	.19	Oregon.....	.08
Nebraska.....	.19	Arizona.....	.08
Oklahoma.....	.18	Iowa.....	.07
Wisconsin.....	.18	Maryland.....	.07
Vermont.....	.17	New York.....	.06
Florida.....	.17	Tennessee.....	.05
California.....	.17	Connecticut..	.05
Colorado.....	.15	Wyoming.....	.04
Georgia.....	.15	New Hampshire..	.03
Mississippi.....	.15	Pennsylvania..	.03
D. C. ....	.15	Idaho.....	.03
West Virginia..	.14	New Mexico....	.02
Washington.....	.14	Utah.....	.01
Virginia.....	.13	Delaware.....	.002
Montana.....	.13	Maine.....	.001
Indiana.....	.13	U.S.A.	\$.13

^aBased on gross amounts presented in column (2) of Table 6.

^bRounded off to two decimal places. The rank arrangement of states is based on per capita carried to three decimal places.

state during 1940-41. According to this table the per capita expenditure for the entire nation was \$.13, and the range was from \$.28 down to \$.001. Four states (Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, and South Carolina) received \$.25 per capita or more; and sixteen

states received less than \$.10 per capita in WPA library aid.

The geographical distribution of library project benefits on a per capita basis is shown on a map of the United States in Figure 5. As a measure of the effective differences in relative benefits this map gives a truer comparison than the one based on total amounts of aid received (see Fig. 4).

Unfortunately, neither gross nor per capita figures alone show accurately which states benefited most in terms of over-all gains. These two sets of data must be considered together if the distribution is to be seen in proper perspective. This can be done by comparing Tables 6 and 7 or Figures 4 and 5. For convenience, however, gross and per capita WPA expenditures for 1940-41 have been plotted graphically, in close juxtaposition, by state, in Figure 6. In this illustration the states are arranged in rank order, according to gross amounts of federal library assistance received. By comparing the contour formed by the descending amounts of aid represented at the left side of the chart with that formed by the per capita data it can be seen at a glance that a very slight positive relationship (most noticeable at the top and the bottom of the figure) exists between the two groups of data.

The important fact shown by this illustration is that the first eight states in gross amounts received also rank near the top in per capita benefits from the program, and that the seven states receiving the least total assistance also rank very low on a per capita basis.

This figure shows clearly which individual states benefited most on both bases and which ones rank high in total benefits but low in per capita amounts received, or vice versa. Ohio and New Jersey certainly gained more than any other states, when gross and per capita benefits are considered together. Illinois and Texas received unusually large gross benefits but per capita grants were proportionately less. New York is a similar, equally striking case. Minnesota and South Carolina, on the other hand, while not among the highest states in total benefits, are leading beneficiaries of library project assistance when these benefits are converted to a per capita basis. At the lower end of the range similar examples appear. Vermont and Nevada, states which received very little aid compared to the other states, both appear to have been quite generously assisted in per capita terms.

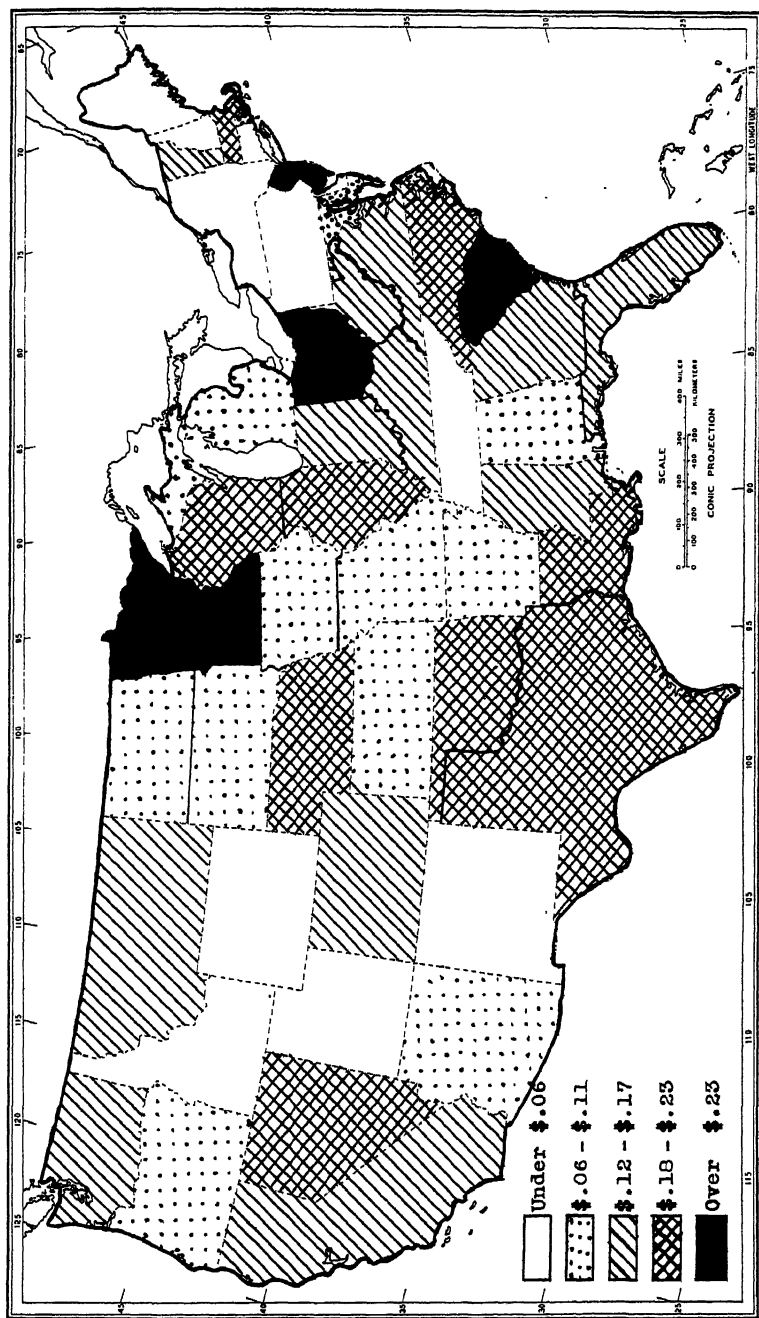


Fig. 5.--Per capita WPA expenditures on library projects during 1940-41*

*Source: This map is based on the data in Table 7. From Goode's Series of Base Maps (The University of Chicago Press).

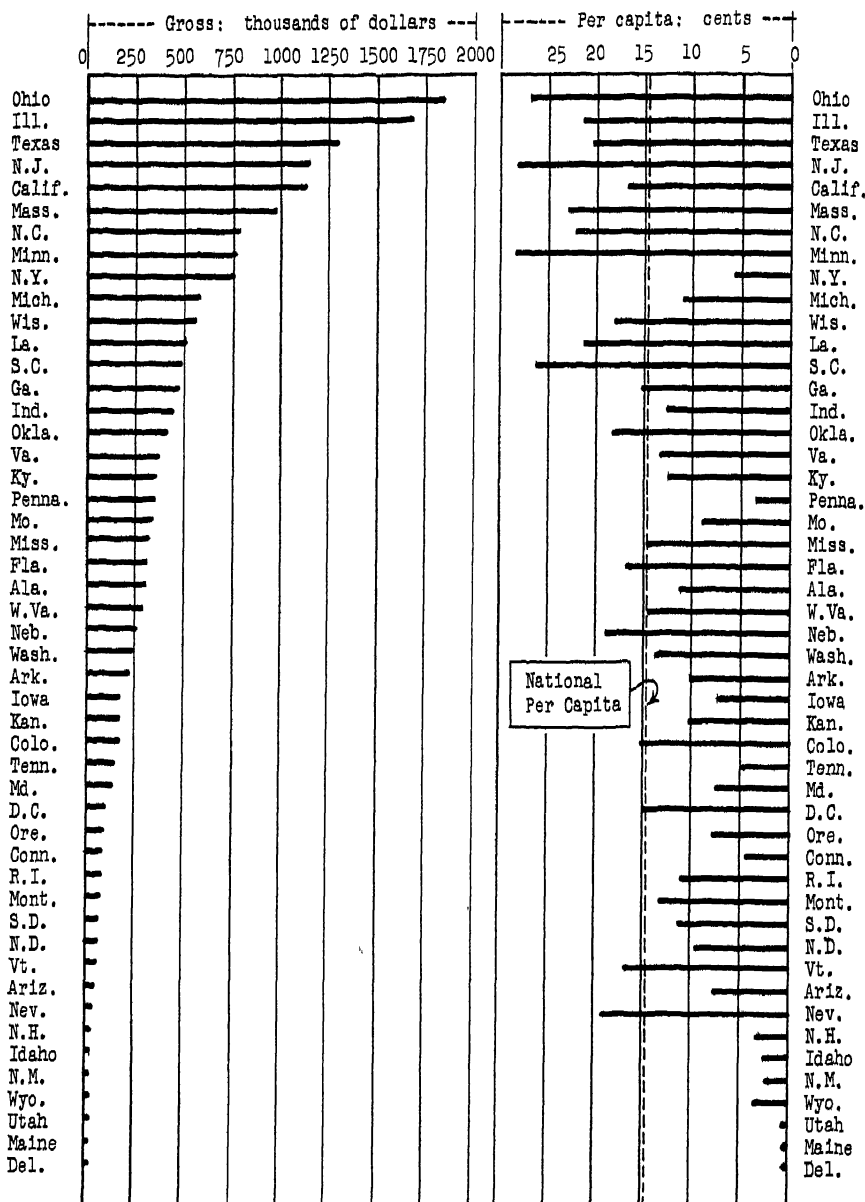


Fig. 6.--Comparison between gross and per capita WPA expenditures on library projects in 1940-41.*

*Source: Based on data presented in Tables 7 and 8.

The Distribution of WPA Library Assistance among
the States, in Relation to Other Factors

The degree of adequacy with which WPA library assistance has been distributed could be determined accurately only by comparing its distribution with some objective index of relative need for federal library aid of the sort rendered by this program. Unfortunately no such measure which considers both the library and the work relief needs of the various states has been developed. In the absence of such a device, therefore, this study attempts to characterize the distribution of WPA library project benefits by relating its pattern to selected factors closely associated with differences in existing library need.

The method by which these relationships are established is that of rank order correlation between the distribution of WPA library assistance in 1940-41 and each of the measures used. The rank order method of relating two sets of data (referred to with reference to the Spearman formula in a footnote on p. 54) admittedly does not show the exact relationship of their respective individual values, since it is entirely a correlation of position or rank when the data are arranged according to magnitude. In the present instance, however, where several such relationships are studied comparatively, the correlation clearly shows which of the measures are most closely associated with differences in library project benefits.

The five factors, or rough measures of relative need, ability, and effort, are: (1) population, (2) the number of people without library service (which are related to gross amounts of WPA library assistance), (3) per capita "Suggested Federal Grants," (4) per capita income payments, and (5) per capita library support (which are correlated with per capita program benefits).¹⁴ Only one of these factors, the schedule of "Suggested

¹⁴Population is for 1940, as reported by the Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940.

Pop. without: ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

"Suggested Federal Grants" is a proposed program for federal aid to libraries based on differences in need. It is taken from: Carleton B. Joeckel, Library Service (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938). (Staff Study No. 11. Prepared for the Advisory Committee on Education), p. 85.

Per capita income payments are for 1940, as reported by

Federal Grants" (which is more fully described on p. 76) can be considered a true measure of relative library need in terms of federal aid. However, as factors or elements which would have to be used in developing any future equitable formula for apportioning funds for library development, the other so-called measures provide a useful framework against which the effectiveness of the present program of library assistance can be profitably studied.

In Tables 8 and 9 the statistics on WPA library assistance and on each of the other factors, together with the rank order numbers of the states for each factor, are presented as a basis for considering these relationships. Table 8 is concerned with gross amounts only, and is arranged according to total library project benefits received by each state. Table 9 presents per capita data on project expenditures, relative need, ability, and effort, and, similarly, is arranged according to per capita benefits received by the individual states.

Comparison of WPA library expenditures with population---

Gross or total population is a very simple and rather obvious measure of relative need for library aid. However, since it does not reveal differences in existing library facilities, library support, tax-paying ability, and unit costs of various kinds of service, it cannot be used alone as an accurate index of library need. Nevertheless, because there is generally a direct and positive relationship between the cost of library service and the number of people to be served, population does constitute at least a rough measure against which the distribution of WPA library benefits can be studied.

In columns (2) and (3) of Table 8 statistics on gross WPA expenditures on library projects and population are presented. Columns (5) and (6) show the rank of the individual states on these same factors. By inspection it can be seen that there is a pronounced, positive relation, state by state, between population and the amounts received in WPA funds as library assistance. Actually, the rank order correlation of these two sets of data is +.9092, which, in statistical terms, indicates a "very close"

the U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, August, 1941, Table 3, p. 14.

Per capita library support is for 1938 (using 1940 population and expenditures reported in ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

TABLE 8

TOTAL WPA EXPENDITURES ON LIBRARY PROJECTS DURING 1940-41,
COMPARED WITH POPULATION AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
WITHOUT PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE, BY STATE^a

State (1)	Amounts (in Thousands)			Rank Order		
	WPA Expend- itures (2)	1940 Popula- tion (3)	'38 Pop. without Libraries (4)	WPA Expend- itures (5)	1940 Popula- tion (6)	'38 Pop. without Libraries (7)
Ohio.....	\$ 1,858	6,908	156	1	4	38
Ill.	1,693	7,897	1,942	2	3	3
Tex.	1,300	6,415	3,367	3	6	2
N.J.	1,167	4,160	177	4	9	36
Calif.	1,147	6,907	96	5	5	40
Mass.	984	4,317	0	6	8	46
N.C.	791	3,572	1,749	7	11	7
Minn.	787	2,792	1,020	8	18	18
N.Y.	767	13,479	1,475	9	1	13
Mich.	583	5,256	961	10	7	20
Wis.	566	3,138	877	11	13	21
La.	501	2,364	1,196	12	21	17
S.C.	478	1,900	875	13	26	22
Ga.	474	3,124	1,921	14	14	4
Ind.	433	3,428	828	15	12	24
Okla.	424	2,336	1,539	16	22	11
Va.	361	2,678	1,522	17	19	12
Ky.	358	2,846	1,792	18	16	6
Pa.	350	9,900	3,399	19	2	1
Mo.	342	3,785	1,736	20	10	8
Miss.	323	2,184	1,732	21	23	9
Fla.	320	1,897	854	22	27	23
Ala.	317	2,833	1,810	23	17	5
W. Va.	276	1,902	1,375	24	25	14
Neb.	249	1,316	692	25	32	25
Wash.	239	1,736	539	26	30	26
Ark.	201	1,949	1,336	27	24	15
Ia.	189	2,538	1,279	28	20	16
Kan.	187	1,801	979	29	29	19
Colo.	171	1,123	434	30	33	29
Tenn.	144	2,916	1,610	31	15	10
Md.	134	1,821	213	32	28	36
D.C.	97	663	0	33	37	46
Ore.	87	1,090	271	34	34	32
Conn.	81	1,709	44	35	31	41
R.I.	79	713	(b)	36	36	45
Mont.	75	559	248	37	40	33
S.D.	72	643	481	38	38	28
N.D.	62	642	536	39	39	27
Vt.	61	359	0	40	46	46
Ariz.	39	499	223	41	44	34
Nev.	21	110	30	42	49	42
N.H.	17	492	2	43	45	44
Ida.	16	525	281	44	43	31

TABLE 8--Continued

State (1)	Amounts (in Thousands)			Rank Order		
	WPA Expend- itures (2)	1940 Popula- tion (3)	'38 Pop. without Libraries (4)	WPA Expend- itures (5)	1940 Popula- tion (6)	'38 Pop. without Libraries (7)
N.M.	\$ 13	532	289	45	42	30
Wyo.	9	251	6	46	48	43
Utah.....	3	550	129	47	41	39
Me.	(b)	847	158	48	35	37
Del.	(b)	267	0	49	47	46
Total	\$18,846	131,669	42,179			

^aSee footnote no. 14 on p. 71 for sources of data in this table.

^bItem omitted because its value is less than \$1,000.

degree of association. In fact, it appears that in general (whether by chance or by deliberate intent) the distribution of WPA library assistance during 1940-41 was essentially on a population basis.

The reasons for this close degree of association are not difficult to explain. The determination of each state's allotment of WPA funds for its entire work relief program was based largely on population and estimated unemployment loads.¹⁵ Therefore, except for variations among the states in relative emphasis upon library projects as a type of white-collar work relief, benefits from the library assistance program would naturally tend to be roughly proportionate to state populations.

The outstanding exceptions to this pattern of distribution can be seen by comparing columns (5) and (6) in this table. Among the states receiving far more than might be expected on this basis are Minnesota (eighth in project benefits but eighteenth in population) and South Carolina (thirteenth in benefits received but twenty-sixth in population). In contrast, New York, first in population, is ninth in library project expenditures, and Pennsylvania, second in population, is nineteenth in library

¹⁵A. W. Macmahon, J. D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden, The Administration of Federal Work Relief (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1941), p. 223.

assistance. Even more striking, perhaps, than these exceptions to the general pattern of distribution is the fact that in actual amounts of money Ohio, with less than half the population of New York State, received more than twice as much WPA library assistance during 1940-41.

Comparison of WPA library expenditures with the number of people without library service.---A more nearly accurate measure of differences among the states in relative need--from the point of view of federal library aid--is the number of people still without free public library service in each state. Statistics on the population of unserved areas in every state were published for the year 1938 in July, 1939.¹⁶ These figures, together with rank order numbers of the states on this basis, appear in columns (4) and (7) respectively, in Table 8.

By comparing columns (5) and (7)--the two sets of rank order numbers--it can be seen that the relationship between library project benefits and population without libraries is positive, but much less close than with the total population of each state. The actual rank order correlation in this case is +.5334, indicating a "marked" degree of association. This is explained by the fact that (with exceptions such as Massachusetts, California, New Jersey, and Ohio) states with large populations and large relief loads also tend to have large numbers of people without access to libraries. It may be said, therefore, that to a considerable degree the states receiving the most extensive library assistance from the WPA in 1940-41 were those with large unserved populations.

Comparison of WPA library assistance with economic measures, on a per capita basis.---Since both the amounts of WPA expenditures on library activities and various factors associated with need naturally tend to increase with the size and population of the states, rank order correlations between project benefits and these other factors tend to show positive degrees of association when computed in terms of gross or absolute figures.¹⁷ For this reason the relationship between the distribution of WPA li-

¹⁶ ALA Bulletin, XXXIII (July, 1939), 515.

¹⁷ The correlation of gross project benefits with income is +.8278, while it is +.7651 with "Suggested Federal Grants" and +.6184 with total library support.

brary assistance and economic measures of need is considered only on a per capita basis.

Table 9 presents per capita WPA expenditures on library projects in juxtaposition with per capita "Suggested Federal Grants," per capita income, and per capita library support. The data are arranged according to the per capita benefits received from the WPA library program. The rank order of the states for each of these factors appears in columns (6) through (9).

"Suggested Federal Grants" refers to a proposed pattern for distributing federal aid for library development in relation to need. Published in 1938 under the heading "A Working Schedule of Grants to Libraries,"¹⁸ it is the only such measure that has been devised specifically in terms of federal library aid. The amounts suggested under this plan include: (1) an equalization grant based on an annual library program of \$.60 per capita for each state, (2) an additional \$.10 per capita for the rural population of each state, and (3) a stimulation allotment equal to 5 per cent of each state's annual expenditures for public library service. The total suggested amounts, converted to per capitae (according to the 1940 population) appear in column (3) of Table 9, while the rank order numbers for these amounts are listed in column (7).

By inspection of columns (6) and (7) it can be seen that almost no relationship whatever exists between per capita project benefits and this per capita index of relative need. The rank order correlation between these two factors is only +.1575.

Per capita income payments, including net salaries and wages, other labor income, entrepreneurial income, and dividends and interest¹⁹ also provide, in terms of total potential ability to support public services, including libraries, a rough index of relative need for federal library aid. If existing library facilities and per capita expenditures for library service in the various states were proportionate to their per capita income, then the latter would comprise an excellent inverse measure of relative need. Actually, per capita income alone, while useful in comparing the states on the basis of ability, is not an accurate index

¹⁸Joeckel, op. cit., p. 85.

¹⁹U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, op. cit.

TABLE 9

PER CAPITA WPA EXPENDITURES ON LIBRARY PROJECTS DURING 1940-41,
COMPARED WITH PER CAPITA "SUGGESTED FEDERAL GRANTS,"
PER CAPITA INCOME, AND LIBRARY SUPPORT, BY STATE^a

State (1)	Amounts ^b				Rank Order			
	WPA Expendi- tures (2)	Suggested Federal Grants (3)	1940 Income Payments (4)	1938 Library Support (5)	WPA Expendi- tures (6)	Suggested Federal Grants (7)	1940 Income Payments (8)	1938 Library Support (9)
Minnesota.....	\$.28	\$.06	\$ 526	\$.51	1	31	24	11
New Jersey.....	.28	.05	852	.59	2	45	4	9
Ohio.....	.27	.06	644	.86	3	31	13	2
South Carolina..	.25	.37	281	.10	4	4	46	40
Massachusetts...	.23	.06	767	.79	5	33	8	3
North Carolina..	.22	.33	335	.09	6	7	42	42
Illinois.....	.21	.05	691	.51	7	44	11	12
Louisiana.....	.21	.29	350	.06	8	9	41	46
Texas.....	.20	.23	422	.11	9	11	34	37
Nevada.....	.19	.07	960	.45	10	24	2	17
Nebraska.....	.19	.08	444	.31	11	19	33	25
Oklahoma.....	.18	.30	354	.11	12	8	40	38
Wisconsin.....	.18	.06	537	.37	13	30	23	22
Vermont.....	.17	.18	542	.43	14	14	22	19
Florida.....	.17	.17	465	.10	15	15	31	39
California.....	.17	.05	819	.73	16	43	6	5
Colorado.....	.15	.06	551	.32	17	37	20	23
Georgia.....	.15	.36	321	.08	18	5	46	43
Mississippi.....	.15	.43	195	.03	19	1	49	49
Dist. of Columbia	.15	(c)	1,022	.06	20	(c)	1	1
West Virginia...	.14	.07	401	.05	21	24	36	47
Washington.....	.14	.06	633	.40	22	40	15	20

State	.13	.20	455	.12	23	13	32	35
Virginia.....	.13	.20	455	.12	23	13	32	35
Montana.....	.13	.07	579	.30	24	20	18	27
Indiana.....	.13	.06	551	.48	25	36	20	13
Kentucky.....	.12	.35	330	.10	26	6	43	40
South Dakota...	.11	.10	384	.21	27	16	43	32
Alabama.....	.11	.41	264	.07	28	2	47	44
Michigan.....	.11	.07	656	.47	29	24	12	15
Rhode Island...	.11	.04	730	.68	29	48	9	6
Kansas.....	.10	.07	418	.23	31	21	35	31
Arkansas.....	.10	.38	253	.05	32	3	48	48
North Dakota...	.10	.09	385	.15	33	17	37	33
Missouri.....	.09	.06	499	.32	34	40	26	24
Oregon.....	.08	.07	586	.53	35	28	17	10
Arizona.....	.08	.06	478	.13	36	37	28	34
Iowa.....	.07	.07	471	.31	37	23	29	26
Maryland.....	.07	.06	703	.26	38	37	10	29
New York.....	.06	.04	814	.62	39	46	7	7
Tennessee.....	.05	.29	325	.12	40	10	44	36
Connecticut.....	.05	.06	864	.77	41	33	3	4
Wyoming.....	.04	.08	638	.47	42	18	14	14
New Hampshire...	.03	.07	560	.62	43	28	19	8
Pennsylvania...	.03	.04	624	.27	43	46	16	28
Idaho.....	.03	.07	470	.24	45	24	30	30
New Mexico.....	.02	.21	356	.07	46	12	39	44
Utah.....	.01	.06	487	.39	47	40	27	21
Delaware.....	.002	.06	836	.43	48	33	5	18
Maine.....	.001	.07	504	.46	49	21	25	16
U.S.A.	\$.14	\$.13	\$ 573	\$.39				

^aSee footnote no. 14 on p. 71 for sources of this table.

^bPer capita are rounded off to two decimal places, but the states are arranged according to three place differences in column (2).

^cDistrict of Columbia not included in schedule of suggested grants.

of need for federal aid.

Per capita income payments for 1940 are presented in column (4) of Table 9; and the rank order of the states are listed in column (8). If the distribution of WPA library assistance had been made on the basis of need there would be a close inverse relationship between the per capita income of the various states and per capita benefits received. Actually, there is almost no relation whatever between these two factors, for the rank order coefficient of correlation is only $-.0418$.

Per capita library support, presented in column (5), is included in Table 9 as a measure of the differences among the states in existing library facilities. Since it is not related to economic ability, it is not a true measure of relative effort; but it does show clearly which states are already giving strong support to public libraries and which ones are notably weak in this regard. The amounts reported here are those for the year 1938,²⁰ converted to per capitas by means of 1940 population figures.

The rank order numbers of the states in per capita library support appear in column (9). When these are compared with those on library project expenditures no relationship whatever is apparent. The rank order correlation in this case is even less than in the other instances cited. It is $-.0027$.

Summary.---The rank order relationships discussed in this section are assembled for convenient comparison in Table 10. On the basis of this table the distribution of benefits from WPA library project activity in 1940-41 may be characterized as follows:

In general, gross amounts of WPA library assistance were distributed according to population. Therefore, since each state's population is a fair measure of its total need for library service, it may be said that gross benefits have in fact been apportioned at least roughly in proportion to need.

Only to a partial (though no less important) extent were the total library benefits received by each state proportionate to differences in specific need--in terms of unserved population.

On a per capita basis there is very little relationship between library project expenditures and important differences in need for library assistance, measured by an objective

schedule of proposed federal grants for libraries. Thus, the distribution of library benefits cannot be said to constitute a wholly equitable apportionment, from the point of view of federal library aid.

If equalization of library opportunity had determined the distribution of WPA library assistance, its apportionment would exhibit an inverse correlation with the relative wealth or income of the various states. In the present instance, however, there was almost no relationship whatever--either positive or negative--between library project benefits and income, on a per capita basis.

On the other hand, since only an insignificant relationship exists between these benefits and library expenditures, WPA library assistance was in no sense a program of stimulating grants, allocated in proportion to the support of existing library service.

In general, this federal aid for library development, like other benefits from WPA assistance, appears to have been distributed among the states primarily according to differences in population and work relief loads.

TABLE 10

RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN WPA EXPENDITURES ON LIBRARY PROJECTS DURING 1940-41, BY STATE, AND OTHER FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RELATIVE NEED FOR LIBRARY AID^a

Factors Compared	Correlation ^b
Gross WPA expenditures and population	+ .91
Gross WPA expenditures and number of people without library service	+ .53
Per capita WPA expenditures and per capita suggested federal grants	+ .16
Per capita WPA expenditures and 1940 per capita income payments	- .04
Per capita WPA expenditures and 1938 per capita library support	- .003

^aBased on data in Tables 8 and 9.

^bRank order coefficients computed by the Spearman formula and rounded off to two places.

Regional Differences in the Distribution of WPA Library Assistance

The final analysis of WPA library assistance as federal aid concerns the extent to which the different regions of the United States benefited from the program during 1940-41 in rela-

tion to relative need. The regions used are the Southeast, the Northeast, the Midwest, the Northwest, the Southwest, and the Far West, as defined by H. W. Odum.²¹ These regions are compared according to the same factors used in studying the distribution of project benefits among the states. Table 11 presents statistics on each of these factors on a regional basis.

From this table it can be seen that the eight states comprising the Midwest region received more than one-third of all WPA funds spent on library projects that year, although it has barely one-third of the nation's population and barely one-fifth of the people without library service. In contrast, the Southeast, with more than one-third of the nation's unserved population, received less than one-fourth of the total library assistance provided by the WPA.

In average per capita amounts received the Midwest also leads the rest of the nation (with benefits amounting to \$.17). However, on this basis the Southeast and the Far West (with average benefits of \$.15 per capita) appear to have fared nearly as well.

Perhaps the pattern of regional differences in library project benefits can be characterized most simply by comparing the amounts actually received in each region with the sum each would receive according to the "Suggested Federal Grants" formula. This schedule is the only published measure of library need in terms of federal aid; and the fact that its total recommended allotment is nearly equal to the WPA's total expenditure on library projects in 1940-41 makes the direct comparison of amounts possible and strikingly revealing.

Regional library project benefits and suggested federal grants for libraries are presented for comparison in Table 12, and are shown graphically on a map of the United States in Figure 7. From this table it can be seen that the Midwest received more than four million dollars more in library assistance from the WPA than it would have according to the suggested schedule, while the Southeast received almost \$5,000,000 less than this schedule recommended. Figure 7 also shows clearly how much more certain parts of the nation benefited than others. It shows, for example,

²¹H. W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936).

TABLE 11

REGIONAL COMPARISONS BETWEEN WPA EXPENDITURES ON LIBRARY PROJECTS
DURING 1940-41 AND OTHER FACTORS^a

Region ^c (1)	Amounts in Thousands			Average Per Capita Amounts ^b			
	WPA Expendi- tures (2)	1940 Popula- tion (3)	'38 Pop. without Libraries (4)	WPA Expendi- tures (5)	Suggested Federal Grants (6)	1940 Income Payments (7)	1938 Library Support (8)
I Southeast	\$ 4,267	28,262	16,396	\$.15	\$.33	\$325	\$.08
II Northeast	3,917	39,966	6,843	.10	.07	682	.50
III Midwest	6,451	35,742	8,798	.17	.06	572	.48
IV Northwest	843	7,410	3,786	.09	.08	484	.27
V Southwest	1,777	9,782	5,418	.12	.20	402	.10
VI Far West	1,494	9,843	938	.15	.06	749	.53
Total	\$18,749 ^d	131,005 ^d	42,179				

^aSource: This table is based on the data in Tables 8 and 9.

^bThese regional per capitae are averages of the per capita amounts for all of the states in each region.

^cThe regions, taken from H. W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), are divided as follows:

Region I <u>Southeast</u>	Region II <u>Northeast</u>	Region III <u>Midwest</u>	Region IV <u>Northwest</u>	Region V <u>Southwest</u>	Region VI <u>Far West</u>
Alabama	Connecticut	Illinois	Colorado	Arizona	California
Arkansas	Delaware	Indiana	Idaho	New Mexico	Nevada
Florida	Maine	Iowa	Kansas	Oklahoma	Oregon
Georgia	Maryland	Michigan	Montana	Texas	Washington
Kentucky	Massachusetts	Minnesota	Nebraska		
Louisiana	New Hampshire	Missouri	No. Dakota		
Mississippi	New Jersey	Ohio	So. Dakota		
No. Carolina	New York	Wisconsin	Utah		
So. Carolina	Pennsylvania		Wyoming		
Tennessee	Rhode Island				
Virginia	Vermont				
	West Virginia				

^dTotals for gross WPA expenditures on library projects and for population do not correspond with those in Table 8 because the District of Columbia is not included in any of the regions. Since it has no population without library service, its omission does not affect the total for column (4).

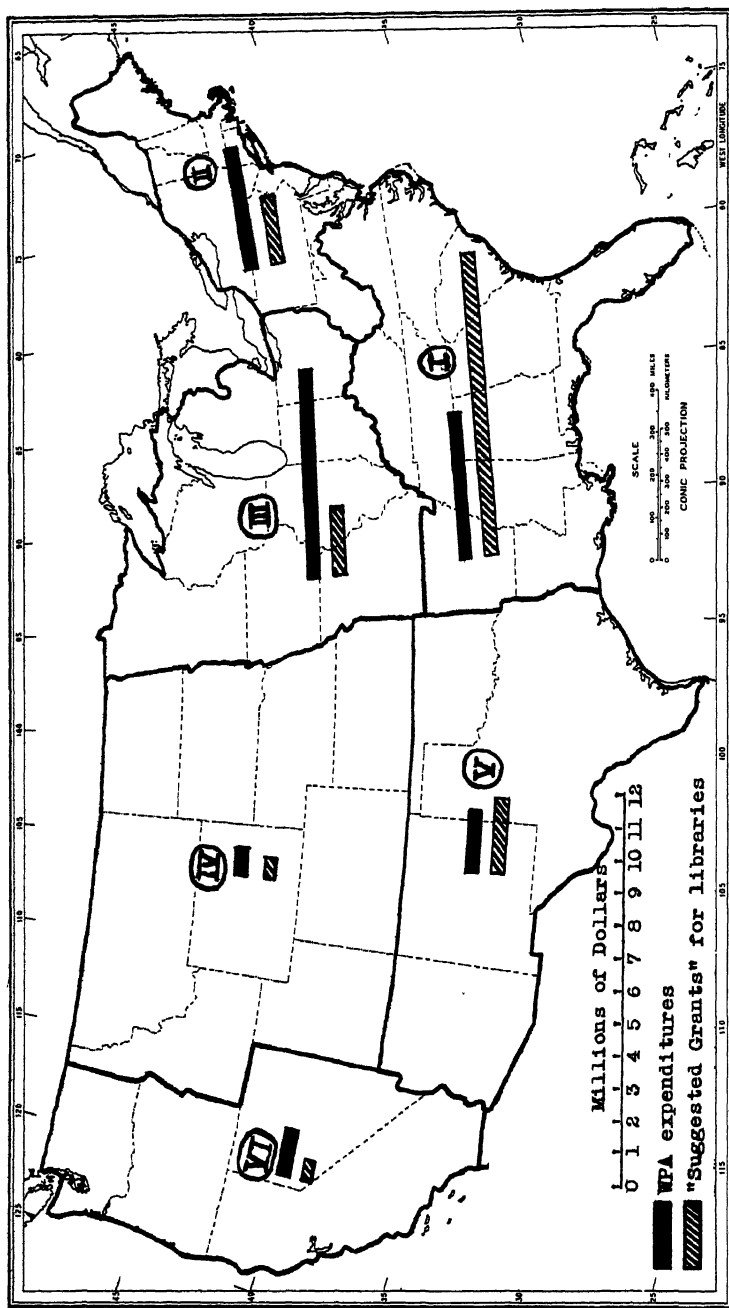


Fig. 7.--Regional distribution of WPA library assistance in 1940-41, compared with "Suggested Federal Grants" for libraries.*

*Source: Based on the data in column (2) in Table 11 and C. B. Joeckel, Library Service (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 85. From Goode Series of Base Maps (The University of Chicago Press).

TABLE 12

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF WPA LIBRARY ASSISTANCE IN 1940-41,
 COMPARED WITH "SUGGESTED FEDERAL GRANTS" FOR LIBRARIES^a
 (In Thousands of Dollars: 000 Omitted)

Region (1)	WPA Expenditures on Library Projects (2)	Suggested Federal Grants for Libraries (3)	Difference (+ or -) between (2) and (3) (4)
I Southeast...	\$ 4,267	\$ 9,265	-\$4,998
II Northeast...	3,917	2,041	+ 1,876
III Midwest.....	6,451	2,182	+ 4,269
IV Northwest...	843	558	+ 285
V Southwest...	1,777	2,333	- 556
VI Far West....	1,494	552	+ 942
United States...	\$18,749	\$16,931	+\$1,818

^aSource: The WPA data are those of Table 6, column (2), summarized by region. The "Suggested Grants" are the amounts reported in C. B. Joeckel, Library Service (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 85.

The differences, in column (4), show how much more or less than the amount suggested in the federal aid proposal each region actually received in library project benefits.

that all four of the northern regions received more than they would have under the federal grants proposal, while both of the southern regions received considerably less. This map also shows that three-fourths of all WPA library assistance was concentrated in the eastern half of the country. Finally, it shows at a glance that the Midwest received almost three times as much benefit from library projects as the amount proposed on the basis of need; the Northeast received almost twice as much as its suggested allotment; while the Southeast received less than half the amount it would have obtained according to this federal aid formula.

In conclusion, it can be said that the importance of WPA assistance as an experiment in federal aid for library development varied greatly from state to state and from region to region. Without a definite plan for apportioning the benefits of this type of work relief, their distribution tended to reflect differences in population and thus only indirectly to reach areas of

greatest library need.

The development of strong project activity in individual states appears to have been conditioned further by two other factors. These are the status of existing library development (the organization, government, and leadership in libraries throughout the state, including the state library agency), and the popular attitude or predisposition toward free public library service as a necessary function of state and local government. In other words, states in which an active and alert state library organization was prepared to take full advantage of the opportunity presented by WPA aid and states in which the citizens at large were interested in extending and improving library service on a state-wide basis naturally benefited from this program proportionately more than states with little prior library activity or interest.

As an ideal program for federal aid, WPA library assistance admittedly leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, as an undertaking primarily concerned with the relief of unemployment and only incidentally with the improvement of library service, it constitutes a most interesting and important experiment in the administration of federal aid for library development.

Library Construction on Federal Work Programs

Since the construction and repair of libraries has been an important contribution of federal work programs, a summary of this construction is presented in Tables 13, 14, and 15, although the data are admittedly not complete. At best they can only be said to include the majority of buildings reported under the general category entitled "Libraries." Many buildings reported under other headings (schools, courthouses, city halls, and college departmental buildings) contain library quarters. For example, although the PWA is credited with only 113 library building projects in Table 13, it has financed the construction of some 1,800 libraries in public schools,²² and at least 60 college or university libraries²³ not represented in the table.

²²U.S. Public Works Administration, America Builds (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939), p. 132.

²³U.S. Public Works Administration, Alloiments for Educational Building Construction . . . (Washington: Public Works Administration, 1939).

TABLE 13
LIBRARY BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED OR REPAIRED
UNDER VARIOUS FEDERAL WORK PROGRAMS,
1933-1941^a

Agency	Number of Buildings				
	Total for Each Agency	New Construction			Renova- tion and Repair
		Total	New Bldgs	Additions	
FERA ^b	359	98	Not reported	Not reported	261
PWA	113	110	(87)	(23)	3
WPA	1,026	194	(130)	(64)	832
NYA	399	54 ^c	Not reported	Not reported	345
Total for PWA, WPA, NYA	1,538	358	...	...	1,180

^aSources: U.S. Works Progress Administration, Government Aid during the Depression to Professional, Technical, and Other Service Workers (Washington: Works Progress Administration, 1936), p. 68; U.S. Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction (Washington: Public Works Administration, 1939); U.S. President, Report of the President Showing the Status of Funds and Operations under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Acts as of December 31, 1941 (Washington: Government Printing Office, January, 1942), p. 31; and a letter from Aubrey Williams, NYA Administrator, December 1, 1941.

^bCovers the period April 1, 1934 to June 1, 1935, but cannot be added to the other data since some buildings included were completed as WPA projects and are recorded as WPA achievements.

^cIncludes 11 buildings still under construction in June, 1941.

It is unfortunate that complete data on the location, type, specifications, and cost of each library building project since 1933 are not available. Such information, together with similar data on libraries constructed without federal assistance, would make it possible to show the government's contribution in its proper proportions. Moreover, it would permit graphic presentation of nation-wide physical library development, showing the

location and type of all buildings erected with PWA, WPA, or NYA help. The total number of new libraries and additions constructed under each program, however, is available by state, and is presented, state by state, in Table 14.

TABLE 14

NEW LIBRARY BUILDINGS OR ADDITIONS CONSTRUCTED UNDER THE
FEDERAL WORKS PROGRAM THROUGH JUNE 30, 1941, BY STATE^a

State	Total Number	PWA ^b	WPA	NYA
Alabama.....	7	1	5	1
Arizona.....	4	2	2	..
Arkansas.....	5	1	3	1
California....	37	13	22	2
Colorado.....	5	1	4	..
Connecticut...	2	2	..	..
Delaware.....	..	..	..	..
Dist. of Col..	..	..	..	..
Florida.....	8	..	8	..
Georgia.....	6	2	3	1
Idaho.....	3	2	1	..
Illinois.....	8	7	1	..
Indiana.....	7	5	2	..
Iowa.....	3	1	2	..
Kansas.....	9	3	6	..
Kentucky.....	5	1	3	1
Louisiana.....	3	1	2	..
Maine.....	1	1	..	..
Maryland.....	3	1	1	1
Massachusetts.	7	5	2	..
Michigan.....	6	3	3	..
Minnesota.....	7	2	5	..
Missouri.....	10	3	5	2
Montana.....	2	..	2	..
Nebraska.....	6	1	5	..
Nevada.....	1	..	..	1
New Hampshire.	3	3	..	..
New Jersey....	16	6	9	1
New Mexico....	8	1	7	..
New York.....	20	4	16	..
North Carolina	11	3	8	..
North Dakota..	3	1	2	..
Ohio.....	19	11	7	1
Oklahoma.....	14	3	11	..
Oregon.....	5	3	2	..
Pennsylvania..	5	1	4	..
Rhode Island..	..	..	..	..
South Carolina	18	1	16	1
South Dakota..	1	..	1	1
Tennessee.....	1	1	..	..
Texas.....	13	5	3	5
Utah.....	6	3	3	..

TABLE 14--Continued

State	Total Number	PWA ^b	WPA	NYA
Vermont.....	1	1	..	..
Virginia.....	7	2	5	..
Washington....	5	3	1	1
West Virginia..	1	..	..	1
Wisconsin.....	6	1	4	1
Wyoming.....	2	..	2	..
Unassigned....	..	..	..	33
Totals...	361	113	194	54

^aSources: PWA data from Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction (1939); WPA and NYA data supplied by those agencies on request.

^bIncludes 3 renovation projects. Does not include New York City.

The PWA alone has compiled and published a list of its individual building projects, identifying each by location and type and giving financial information showing the federal government's share in its cost. Based on this publication²⁴ the data on public library construction under the PWA is presented by state in Table 15 and Figure 8. According to this summary, library facilities representing a total expenditure of almost \$13,000,000 were constructed in 39 states. Over \$5,000,000, or approximately 40 per cent of the cost, was supplied by outright grants of federal funds.

Summarizing the data on library building projects under the various work programs, it can be said that they have been responsible for the erection of at least 400 new libraries or additions and the renovation or repair of almost 1,500 others. Furthermore, although statistical evidence on the point is lacking, it would appear that most of the library construction since 1933 throughout the nation has benefited to a greater or lesser degree from federal financial assistance.

²⁴U.S. Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction . . . , op. cit.

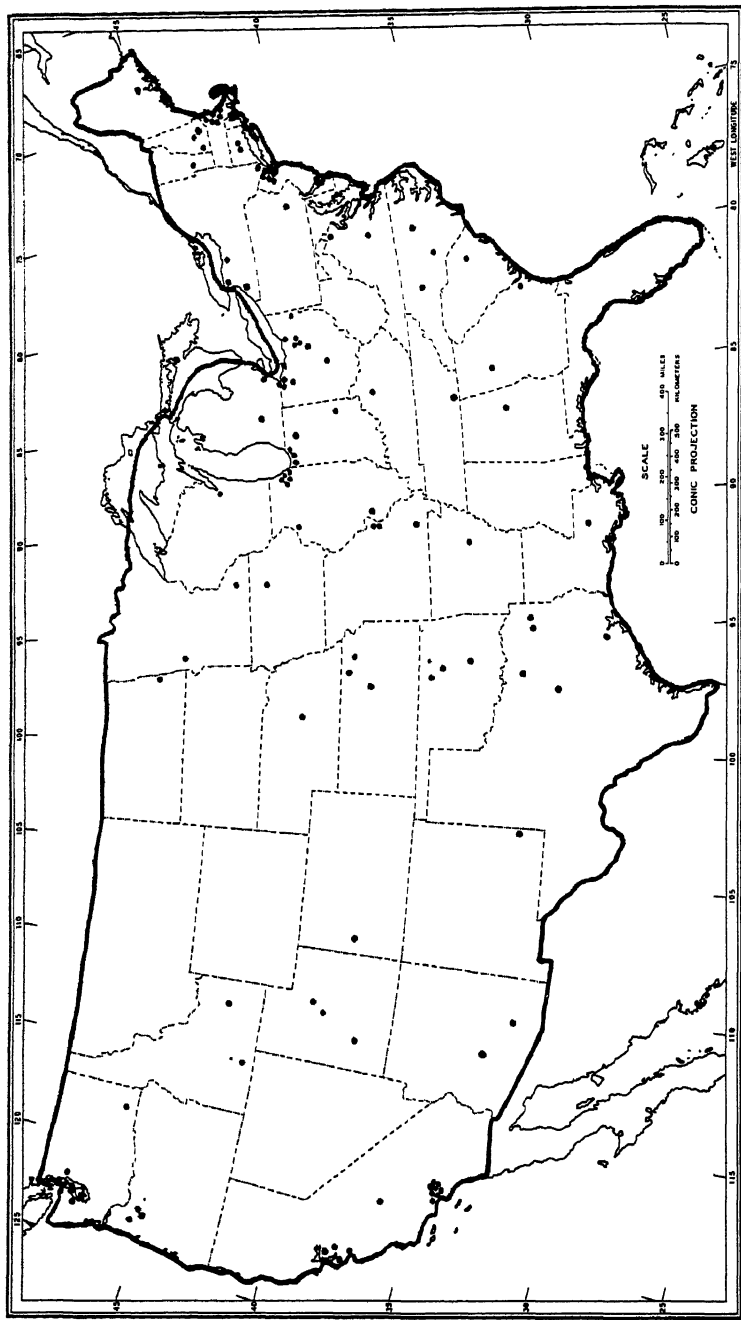


Fig. 8.--Public library construction under the PWA, 1933-1941*

*Source: U. S. Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction (Washington: Public Works Administration, 1939). From Goode's Series of Base Maps (The University of Chicago Press).

TABLE 15

PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION UNDER THE PWA, BY STATE
1933-1941^a

State	Build- ings	Total Cost	PWA Allotment	Sponsor's Share	Per Cent PWA
Alabama.....	1	\$ 25,000	\$ 11,250 ^b	\$ 13,750	45.0 ^b
Arizona.....	2	85,909	44,659 ^b	41,250	52.0 ^b
Arkansas.....	1	30,909	30,909	.....	100.0 ^b
California.....	13	295,152	121,652	173,500	41.2
Colorado.....	1	72,750	32,737	40,013	45.0
Connecticut...	2	201,187	83,300	117,887	41.4
Delaware.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Dist. of Col. .	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Florida.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Georgia.....	2	51,818	23,318	28,000	45.0
Idaho.....	2	90,000	40,500 ^b	49,500	45.0 ^b
Illinois.....	7	484,706	216,736 ^b	267,970	44.7
Indiana.....	5	251,066	111,801	139,265	44.5
Iowa.....	1	308,000	138,600	169,400	45.0
Kansas.....	3	83,377	35,224	48,153	42.2
Kentucky.....	1	44,228	19,903	24,325	45.0
Louisiana.....	1	104,996	47,248	57,748	45.0
Maine.....	1	35,000	15,750	19,250	45.0
Maryland.....	1	20,000	9,000	11,000	45.0
Massachusetts.	5	433,616	182,137	251,479	42.0
Michigan.....	3	360,818	161,833	198,985	44.8
Minnesota.....	2	213,525	85,100	128,425	39.8
Mississippi...	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Missouri.....	3	198,764	88,349	110,415	44.4
Montana.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Nebraska.....	1	9,391	4,090	5,301	43.6
Nevada.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
New Hampshire.	3	270,262	119,668	150,594	44.3
New Jersey....	6	452,641	191,024	261,617	42.2
New Mexico....	1 ^c	7,674	3,017	4,657	39.3
New York ^c	4 ^c	1,785,655 ^c	530,979 ^c	1,254,676 ^c	29.7 ^c
North Carolina	3	104,140	46,760	57,380	44.9
North Dakota..	1	31,250	14,063 ^b	17,187	45.0 ^b
Ohio.....	11	2,358,340	1,091,442 ^b	1,266,898	46.3 ^b
Oklahoma.....	3	245,681	164,114 ^b	81,567	66.8 ^b
Oregon.....	3	1,065,437	479,250	586,187	45.0
Pennsylvania..	1	35,800	16,110	19,690	45.0
Rhode Island..	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
South Carolina	1	18,045	8,120	9,925	45.0
South Dakota..	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Tennessee.....	1	298,200	134,190 ^b	164,010	45.0 ^b
Texas.....	5	558,368	264,812 ^b	293,556	47.4 ^b
Utah.....	3	102,700	46,215	56,485	45.0
Vermont.....	1	30,223	8,755	21,468	28.9
Virginia.....	2	1,843,385	829,521	1,013,864	45.0
Washington....	3	208,680	59,947	148,733	29.1
West Virginia..	..	.....	.....	.....	.....

TABLE 15--Continued

State	Build- ings	Total Cost	PWA Allotment	Sponsor's Share	Per Cent PWA
Wisconsin....	1	33,275	13,891	19,384	41.7
Wyoming.....	..	.....	.....	.....	.....
Total...	113	\$12,846,968	\$5,525,974	\$7,320,994	

^aSource: U.S. Public Works Administration, Allotments for Educational Building Construction . . . (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1939).

^bIncludes a loan as well as an allotment.

^cData for New York City not included in this report.

Selected Aspects of Library Project Achievement

Since 1936 federal work programs have issued reports showing their "progress" and enumerating some of their more outstanding achievements.²⁵ However, these publications rarely offer much information on library project activity. Obvious reasons for this lack are the relative insignificance of these projects compared to the rest of the program and their failure to achieve a status of their own during the early years of work relief. Equally important reasons, however, are the difficulties encountered in obtaining uniform accomplishment reports.

It is a simple matter to report construction achievements, in terms of buildings erected, highways paved or sewers laid. Similarly, the so-called "production" projects can readily report accomplishment, in terms of garments made, amount of food canned, mattresses sewed, or publications issued. Library projects, on the other hand, present an entirely different problem, for their

²⁵U.S. Works Progress Administration, Report on the Works Program, January 15, 1936; Report on Progress of the Works Program, January 31, 1936, March 15, April 15, June 15, July 15, August 15, October 15, December 15, March, 1937, June, December; Report on Progress of the WPA Program, June 30, 1938, June 30, 1939, June 30, 1940; Inventory, An Appraisal of the Results of the Works Progress Administration, 1938; U.S. Federal Works Agency, First Annual Report, 1940; U.S. Public Works Administration, America Builds, The Record of the PWA, 1939. (All of these publications appear with a Washington imprint, as government documents.)

most valuable results frequently cannot be reported in simple, quantitative terms. Nevertheless, for the most part, such achievements on library projects as have been published have been confined to the tabulation of readily measurable categories of data, such as book stock, number of lending units, number of volumes cataloged, number of libraries assisted, gross circulation, books repaired, or volumes transcribed into Braille. Moreover, great differences among the states in reporting methods render unreliable most of the early efforts to present statistics on nation-wide library project accomplishment.

The "production" aspects of the WPA library assistance program naturally lend themselves most readily to reporting in uniform quantitative terms. According to the latest information available, their cumulated achievement is as follows: Through June, 1941, WPA project workers had repaired and put back into circulation 98,622,000 volumes belonging to public or school libraries.²⁶ By the end of 1940 they had typed almost 40,000,000 book catalog cards.²⁷ By the end of 1939 they had transcribed almost 4,000,000 pages for Braille books for the blind.²⁸

Since WPA library service projects are administratively responsible only to state WPA officials, they have not been required to report regularly to the Library Service Section in Washington. The only nation-wide data on library project accomplishment, therefore, have had to be assembled by requesting special compilations from the individual states. One such request for a special report on library projects was sent out by the Library Service Section at the end of 1939. Its findings were published in the American Library Association Bulletin early in 1940.²⁹ During the latter half of 1941 the section was authorized

²⁶U.S. President, Report to the Congress Showing the Status of Funds and Operations under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Acts as of December 31, 1941 (Washington: Government Printing Office, January, 1942), p. 32.

²⁷U.S. Work Projects Administration, Statistical Summary of WPA Community Service Programs, March, 1941 (Washington: Work Projects Administration, 1941), p. 9.

²⁸U.S. Federal Works Agency, First Annual Report, 1940 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 444.

²⁹Edward A. Chapman, "W.P.A. Library Demonstrations Serve Millions of Readers," ALA Bulletin, XXXIV (April, 1940), 225-31.

to solicit from each state a quarterly report on "library service activities," providing information on twenty-six different items.³⁰ The first returns from this new inquiry, covering the period July through September, 1941, were made available to this study, and constitute the latest information to be had on the scope and achievement of WPA library service projects.

According to the special report compiled at the end of 1939³¹ there were then 40 state-wide library projects in operation, serving an estimated population of 11,000,000 persons through 4,652 individual lending units (not including the thousands of deposit stations and bookmobile stops) and 422 county library systems. The supervisory personnel for these projects totaled 527 persons, including 173 trained librarians and 95 of subprofessional grade. The book stock used in these projects was incompletely reported to be over 6,000,000 volumes, including 265,000 purchased with WPA funds. Mobile lending units included 160 bookmobiles, half of which were purchased or rented by the WPA. The amount of cash contributed by sponsors during 1939 for new books was reported as almost \$600,000; and amounts contributed by individual counties ranged from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. Unfortunately, replies to this first questionnaire were not uniformly complete, so the findings, while suggestive of the scope of the program, do not accurately represent its full magnitude.

The new report form which was used to gather library data covering the third quarter of 1941³² was designed with the objective of gathering regular, uniform statistics on library project operation from each of the states. According to a preliminary tabulation of its first returns, it presents the following account of project development.

During the period covered over half of the counties in the United States were receiving library assistance from WPA proj-

³⁰U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Instructions for the Preparation of DSS Form 45, Report of Library Service Activities" (Commissioner's Letter No. 22, July 21, 1941). (Mimeographed.)

³¹Chapman, op. cit.

³²U.S. Work Projects Administration, "DSS Form 45." (Mimeographed.)

ects. The total number of counties reported was 1,706, including 365 library service systems (composed of central depositories, and branches, stations, or bookmobile stops) operated by the WPA. Of these systems 343 were single county units, while 22 were regional, providing library service to 71 different counties. In approximately half of the county systems various sponsors and local groups have pledged to contribute at least \$1,000 a year to the library project. In many counties several times this amount is actually contributed.

In addition to the library systems reported above, the WPA also operates some 2,664 "independent" libraries--units not affiliated with a county or regional library system--and assists 4,326 previously existing libraries in expanding their services with project workers. Other items which indicate the scope of WPA-operated rural library services are the 3,467 deposit stations reported and the 180 mobile units which circulate books regularly at 11,227 stops.

Finally, to complete the record, three other types of information were reported. The first, "books available for circulation," totaled almost 8,000,000 volumes for all WPA-operated units. The second, "population served," a figure based on a preliminary survey of service areas, using the 1940 census data, included almost 14,000,000 persons. Inasmuch as WPA library assistance has emphasized the development of library facilities in unserved areas, it is probable that a large proportion of these 14,000,000 people constitute persons heretofore without public library service. In other words, it has probably provided some service to approximately one-fourth of the 42,000,000 people reported (see Table 8, p. 73) to be without access to libraries in 1938. The third, representing the use of the service in terms of individual loans, reported a total circulation of 5,684,135 books and over 500,000 periodicals during the three-month period.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has undertaken to present and to interpret the available statistics regarding the scope, character, and achievement of the various federal emergency work programs that have benefited libraries and library development. From the evidence presented it appears that, regardless of varied opinions as

to the desirability of library work relief, the results of these programs, in terms of amounts and kinds of assistance rendered, are distinctly impressive.

During 1938-39, the peak year of library project activity, the WPA and the NYA together more than doubled the total number of persons (30,000) previously engaged (either part- or full-time) in library work in the United States. In the six-year period ending in 1941 the WPA alone had spent in behalf of library service more than twice the amount (\$51,000,000) normally spent in support of public libraries throughout the nation; and during the year 1940-41 its library assistance program involved the expenditure of \$26,000,000, or approximately half this amount. In 18 of the states the library project program for this year allocated more than \$500,000 toward the improvement or extension of library facilities and services.

The construction and repair of library buildings also is an impressive contribution by the federal government to library development. According to the data at present available (based, unfortunately, on admittedly incomplete reports), more than 400 new libraries have been built and almost 1,500 have been renovated or repaired by various work programs financed largely with federal funds.

In the field of book rehabilitation WPA workers alone have repaired and put back into service well over 100,000,000 volumes belonging to public and school libraries since 1935.

In the extension of library service to new areas the WPA assistance program has also achieved impressive results. On its state-wide projects it has operated demonstration library service in more than 400 counties at once. To further this work it has purchased over 250,000 volumes of new books for demonstration use, it has assisted approximately 150 counties in obtaining bookmobile equipment, and it has employed more than 500 library project supervisors, including almost 200 trained librarians, to assist existing library authorities in planning and directing library development.

In conclusion, the implications which can be drawn from these various library work activities, viewed as an experiment in federal aid, may be enumerated specifically as follows:

- 1) The library assistance projects of the WPA and the NYA, like those of the work agencies which preceded them, were

seriously limited, as relief undertakings, in the extent to which they could fulfill the requirements of an ideal federal aid program. Their funds benefited the entire nation roughly according to the population of the various states, but with little relation to known state and regional differences in relative library need.

2) The experience of these various agencies since 1933 has shown how work programs, concerned primarily with creating widespread employment, can be successfully applied to the development and improvement of library facilities and services and to the construction and repair of library buildings.

3) The nation-wide development of federally-assisted library activities has undoubtedly drawn attention to the major existing inequalities in library service, and has probably furthered the concept of library service as a national and state concern, as well as a local responsibility.

Finally, it is important to note that despite the admitted limitations of the program in planning and in technical correctness library work relief has in fact constituted an experiment in federal aid for library development, and that its assistance in the aggregate has greatly strengthened and extended the library services of the nation.

The over-all implications of the WPA library assistance program are discussed in greater detail in chapter viii, where its more obvious limitations and the best features of its administrative pattern are considered in relation to the planning of library development for the future.

■

CHAPTER V

THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE WPA LIBRARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

During the first three years of the WPA there was little uniformity of plan, policy, or procedure in its library projects, for there was no library co-ordinator to develop objectives and to work out techniques adapting library practice to conditions imposed by a work relief program. When in 1938 library projects acquired a definite administrative status with the creation of the Library-Service Section in Washington, a uniform pattern of project organization and procedure was formulated with the intent of focusing WPA library assistance on the increase of permanent, tax-supported library service throughout the nation. This pattern now centers in a series of "state-wide" library projects which operate county or regional library service demonstrations as a means of helping previously unserved communities to organize sound, area-wide library systems by integrating existing libraries and extending their services. It is this program which this chapter treats, first as a case study in administration, then as a library extension program. Its organization is depicted as it existed in the spring of 1941, just before all federal work relief was seriously curtailed.

The chapter is divided into five major sections. The first section presents an analysis of the organization and administration of the entire WPA, to provide a frame of reference for considering the administration of the state-wide library assistance program. This section describes each of the various horizontal and vertical units which comprise the WPA's "line-and-staff" organization, and explains the provision for dual lines of authority and responsibility which is characteristic of this particular agency.

A second section discusses the general rules and policies of the WPA, since they constitute the basic limitations within which library activities, like all other projects, must operate.

The third section of the chapter treats the organization and administration of the library assistance program, by describing the role of the Library Service Section, the objectives and characteristics of library work relief, and the operation of a state-wide library project.

The fourth section presents a review and appraisal of the WPA library assistance program from two different points of view: that of public administration (according to accepted principles of administrative organization); and that of librarianship (according to current library extension practice).

A brief summary constitutes the fifth and concluding section of the chapter.

Organization of the WPA¹

When the new and enlarged federal work program was begun in 1935 it was expected that it would be operated largely within the framework of existing agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, the PWA, the CCC, and three new bodies created to provide assistance for rural families (The Resettlement Administration and the Rural Electrification Administration) and needy youth (the NYA). At that time the WPA was thought of as merely a staff or co-ordinating agency, charged with clearing-house functions, reporting, and research. It was authorized to operate small, useful projects of its own mainly to enable it to meet emergency, local needs not provided for by the major operating agencies. Chapter iii (pp.33-45) describes how and why the WPA soon became the chief employer and project operator in the entire program. The present chapter, therefore, considers its organization only as of 1941, when its primary objective was the operation of work projects, in co-operation with state and local governments.

With a view to adapting the work program to local conditions and needs, the basic organization pattern of the WPA provides for decentralized administration at the operating level, subject to such basic federal regulations as are required to

¹This section of the chapter is based largely upon two sources: the WPA's four-volume Manual of Rules and Regulations (loose-leaf, 1939 to date), and A. W. Macmahon, J. D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden, The Administration of Federal Work Relief (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1941).

prevent local abuses and to assure an equitable distribution of relief funds.

The administrative organization of the WPA (shown graphically in Fig. 9) consists of a Central Administration, departmentalized according to function, and territorial units at three additional hierarchical levels--the region, the state, and the district. In accord with the usual "line-and-staff" pattern, the functional divisions of the Central Administration are repeated in each of the three other levels.

Four Major Horizontal Divisions

The four major horizontal divisions of the WPA are:

The Division of Research, Statistics,
and Finance

The Division of Operations, Engineering,
and Project Control

The Division of Community Service
Programs

The Division of Employment

Two of these four divisions clearly represent departmentation by function. They are the Division of Employment (responsible for developing wage and hour schedules, working conditions, job classifications, procedures for hiring and dismissing workers, and labor relations and employee training programs) and the Division of Finance (in charge of research, statistics, and finance).

The two other divisions, both concerned with the actual administration of project operation, are separate largely because of differences existing between two major groups of workers and the consequent differences in the kinds of projects required to utilize their varying skills and aptitudes. Organization charts of these two operating divisions appear in Figure 10.

The Division of Operations (or Engineering and Project Control) is the administrative unit responsible for the operation of construction or engineering projects. This division, which lays sewers and pavements, constructs public buildings, and lays out parks, playgrounds, and airports, directs the activity of from two-thirds to three-quarters of all relief employees.

The Division of Community Service Programs (originally the Women's and Professional Division, then the Professional and

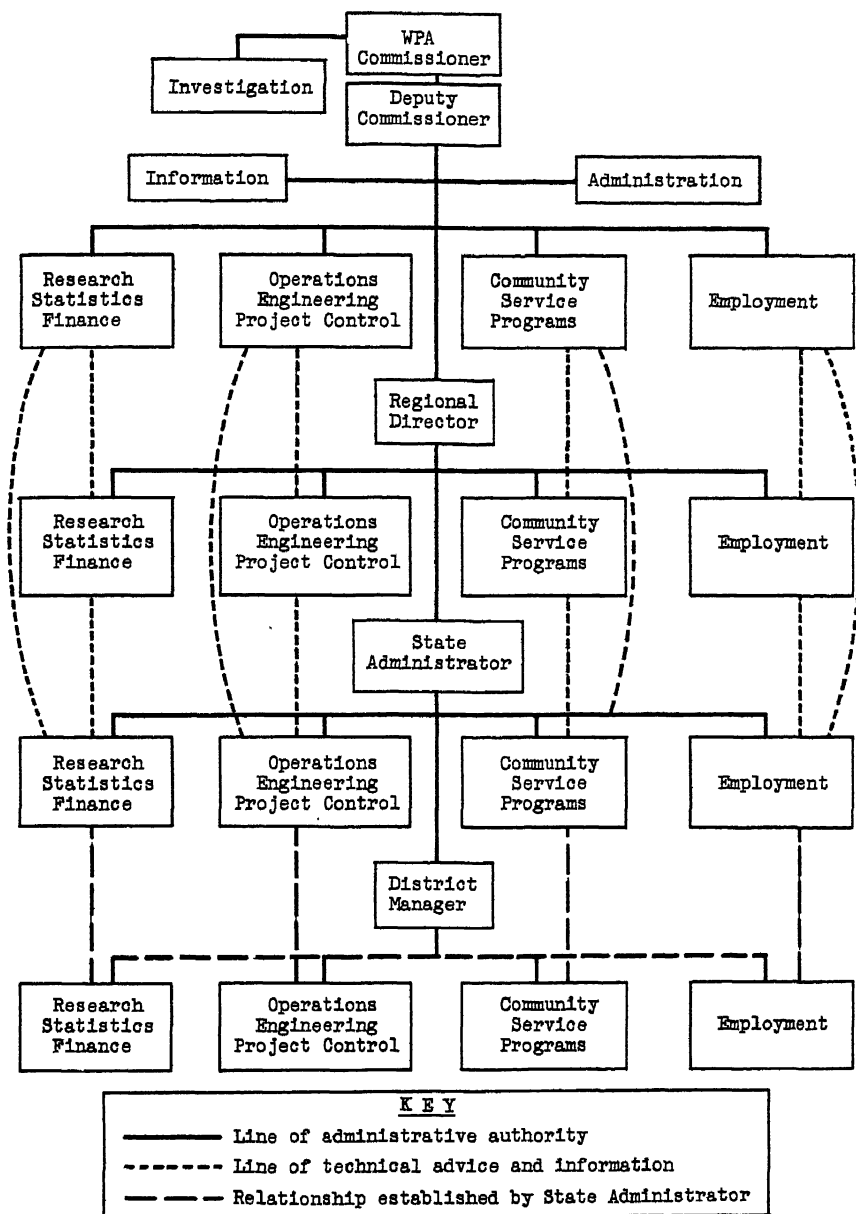


Fig. 9.--Organization of the WPA in 1940-41*

*Source: U.S. Work Projects Administration, Manual of Rules and Regulations, p. 1.1.011 (loose-leaf).

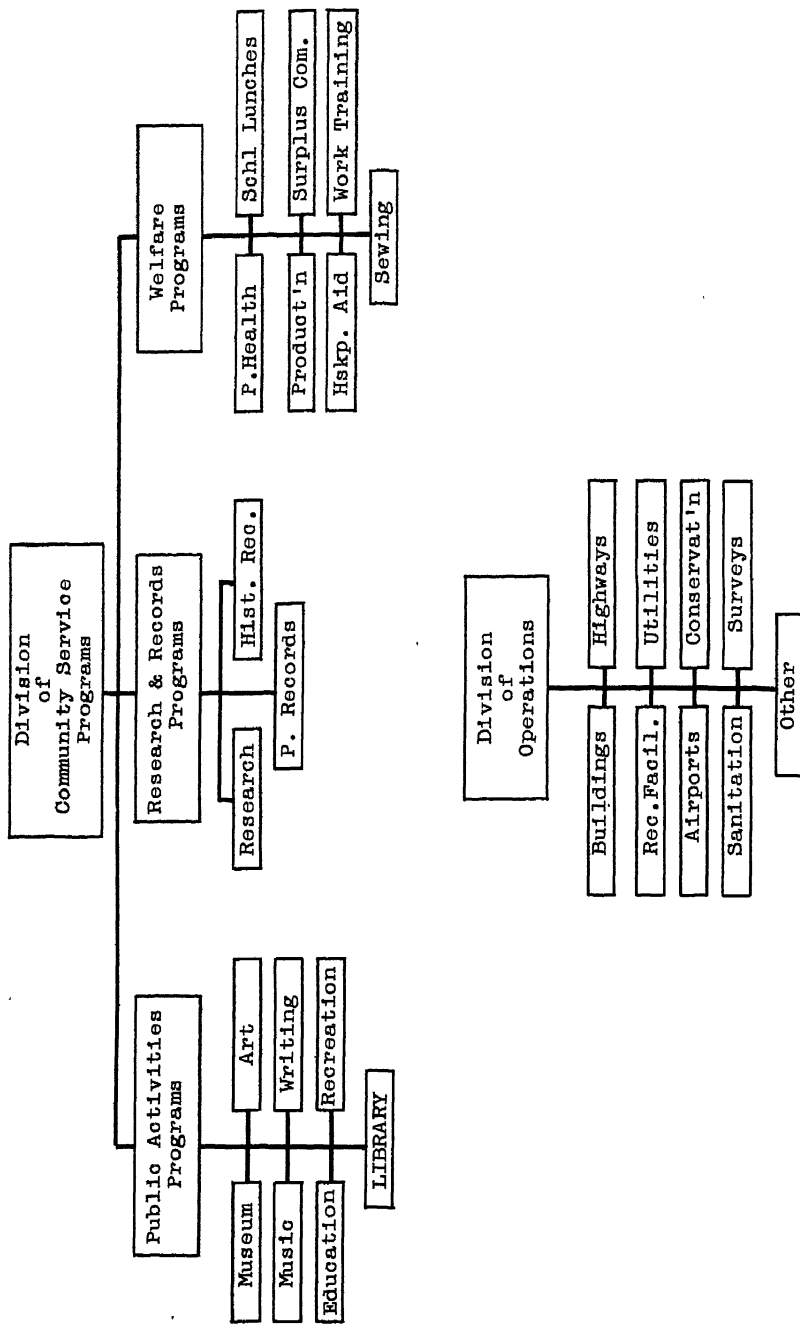


Fig. 10.--Organization of the WPA Division of Community Service Programs and the Division of Operations.

Service Division) is responsible for all women's, white collar, professional, and clerical projects. These operations fall into three groups: (1) Public Activities Programs (cultural, service, and creative projects), (2) Research and Records Programs (surveys and projects for organizing, recording, or preserving public records), and (3) Welfare Programs (the preparation and distribution of food and clothing, and training for domestic service). Unlike the Division of Operations--over 99 per cent of whose employees are men--a large majority of the workers on "CSP" projects are women.

The Four Vertical Hierarchical Levels

The WPA has been described as a decentralized organization with a Central Administration and three territorial hierarchical levels. At the first level below the Central Administration are eight Regional Offices,² each headed by a Director, who is responsible to the WPA Commissioner in Washington. The next level consists of fifty-three State Offices,³ each headed by a State WPA Administrator. Finally, each state is divided into WPA administrative districts. The District Offices are headed by District Managers, who report to the State WPA Administrator.

Each of these various administrators is assisted by a staff of specialists representing each of the WPA's major horizontal divisions.

One of the most important organizational characteristics of the WPA is the manner in which it defines the functions of these "staff" or functional officers and protects their specified powers of technical supervision. In its official manual of regulations the WPA clearly differentiates between the line of "administrative authority" and that of "technical instruction and advice." The former is the primary line of authority and responsibility connecting the four hierarchical levels (see the solid line

²In the summer of 1941, when considerable WPA activity was curtailed, Regions No. 7 and No. 8 (the two western regions) were consolidated as Region No. 7, to reduce the number of regional offices.

³The division of New York and California into two "state" units apiece and the establishment of others for the District of Columbia, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico makes the number of such offices greater than the actual number of states.

in Fig. 9). The latter, defined by the WPA as "a relationship whereby the application of executive policies and regulations at each level and at subordinate levels is guided by technical instruction and advice,"⁴ represents a provision designed to permit divisional specialists, acting in an advisory capacity, to guide the development of projects under their technical jurisdiction (see the dotted lines in Fig. 9).

The importance which the WPA places on maintaining both of these lines of supervision is indicated by the fact that although State WPA Administrators may determine the major lines of authority relating state and district officers, they may not interfere with the direct lines of technical instruction between the functional divisions at all levels.⁵ It is this provision which permits the Library Service Section to negotiate directly, in technical matters, with state and district library project supervisors (see Fig. 12).

The functions and powers of each of the four hierarchical levels of the WPA organization are now briefly discussed, in turn.

The Central Administration.--The headquarters office of the WPA in Washington, headed by a Commissioner, a Deputy Commissioner, and an Assistant Commissioner for each functional division, is the planning, policy-making, and regulatory unit which guides and directs the entire work relief program. It is not an operating unit itself. It is the administrative center of the organization. It prescribes conditions for project eligibility, establishes rates of pay and job classifications, formulates uniform rules and regulations governing project operation, and approves all project applications. Among its administrative functions are organizing, budgeting, co-ordinating, reporting, and carrying on constant self-analysis and research.

Other specific responsibilities of the Central Administration are the distribution of WPA funds among the states and among various types of projects and the development of standard procedures suited to many diverse local conditions. The Commissioner recommends the appointment of Regional Directors and candidates for important state positions. However, since senatorial

⁴U.S. Work Projects Administration, Manual of Rules and Regulations, I, 1.1.013 (loose-leaf).

⁵Ibid., p. 1.1.012.

confirmation is required for appointments paying \$5,000 or more, he is by no means a free agent in his selection.

Finally, it is the function of the Central Administration to represent the entire program before Congress and the people. In this capacity it gathers and interprets nation-wide statistics on WPA employment, expenditures, and selected items of achievement, issues special studies on unemployment and work relief, and publishes periodic reports on its progress and accomplishment.

Regional Offices.—The Regional Offices of the WPA (see Fig. 11 for their location) were created to reduce the Central Administration's span of communication to a workable size. Individual State WPA Administrators, therefore, are expected to deal with their Regional Director, rather than Washington, in most matters requiring assistance from a higher authority. Most State Administrators do go to Washington at least once a year to discuss their own special problems with the Commissioner, but they have not met there in a group since 1935. The use of assembled gatherings for administrative purposes is confined largely to meetings of Regional Directors and to regional conferences of selected state officials.

The primary function of these regional units may best be described as liaison, or perhaps co-ordination. True enough, the lines of direct authority do pass through the Regional Offices en route to the states. Nevertheless, a Regional Director does not personally administer a group of state programs. Rather, he gives them his general oversight, as a representative of the Commissioner. In a word, the Regional Offices are the co-ordinating arms of the Central Administration.

A Regional Office is empowered to interpret agency regulations, to authorize exceptions to meet local conditions, to recommend state employment quotas, to review tentatively certain project proposals, to hold regional conferences of WPA officers, to approve certain state appointments, and to recommend changes in operating procedures to the Central Administration.⁶

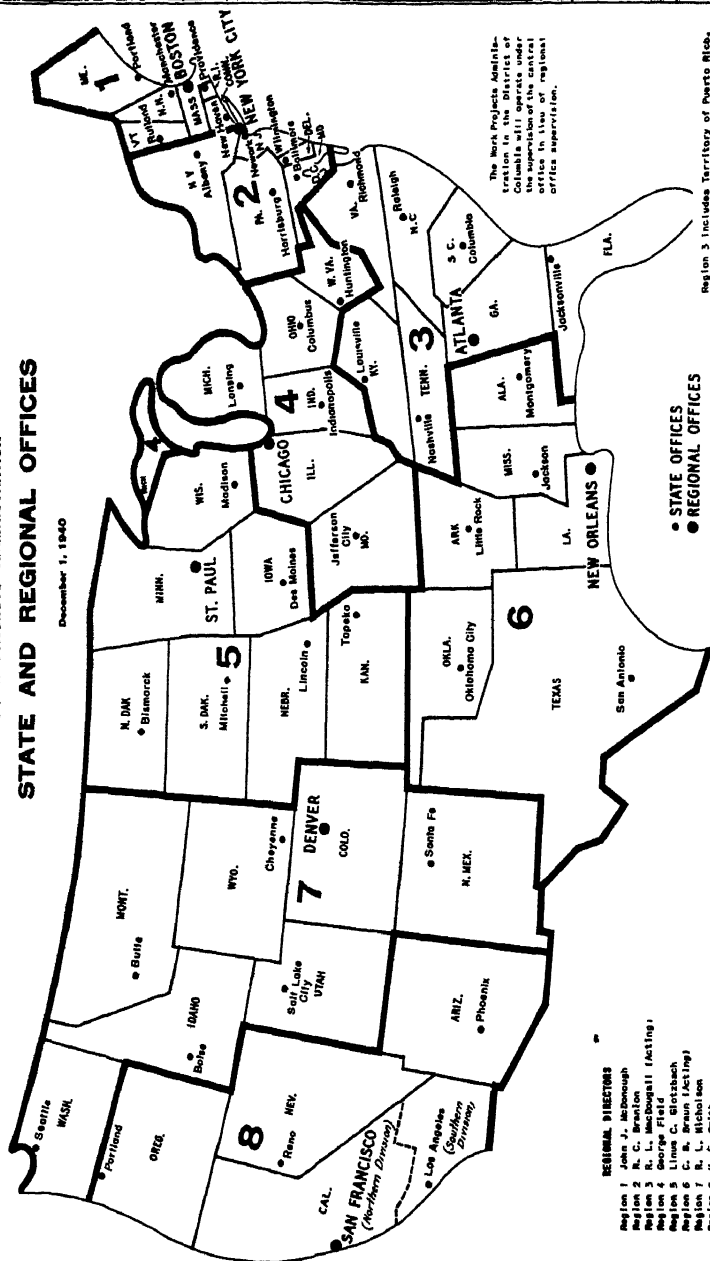
Although all dealings involving questions of policy are conducted through the Regional Offices, considerable correspondence nevertheless does take place directly between the states and the Central Administration. Divisional specialists in Washington,

⁶Ibid., pp. 1.2.27-8.

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

STATE AND REGIONAL OFFICES

December 1, 1940



REGIONAL DIRECTORS
Region 1 John J. MacBrough
Region 2 R. C. Branton
Region 3 R. L. MacBougall (Acting)
Region 4 C. C. Branton
Region 5 L. C. Branton
Region 6 C. R. Branton (Acting)
Region 7 R. L. Branton
Region 8 R. E. Smith

Fig. 11.-- WPA state and regional offices

for example, deal directly with their counterparts at the state level in disseminating technical advice and information, and much routine business concerning project operation is allowed to bypass the regions.

State Administrations.---The State Administration is the basic unit for WPA project operation and control. Within the limits imposed by the Central Administration and its regional representatives, each State Administrator is responsible for the entire development of the work relief program within his state.

Each state office has divisional directors paralleling those at the central and regional levels. These "staff" officers advise the State Administrator in project planning. Actually, they also exercise considerable control over the conduct of project operations in their respective fields. For example, a state's Director of the Division of Operations supervises the planning, scheduling, and execution of all construction and engineering projects, and the Director of Community Service Programs performs similar functions for activities of a professional or service nature. The specific duties of these officers include assisting sponsors in formulating project proposals, interpreting operating procedures, recommending supervisory personnel, establishing standards of performance, and representing their fields of operation at the state level. Since these divisional specialists are in a position to encourage or limit the development of any program in their charge, it is clear why the support of the State Director of "CSP" is vital to the success of every state-wide library project.

As noted previously, the State WPA Administrator is empowered to determine (with certain limitations) the administrative relationships at the state and district level. He may also delegate authority to his subordinate officers at his discretion, except in specified matters. He may not delegate to others the designation of the public welfare agency to certify candidates for WPA employment, the specification of standards for certification, the authorization of staff appointments and salaries, the application of exceptions to WPA regulations, the release of official information, and certain other matters for which he, as Administrator, is considered accountable.⁷

⁷Ibid., p. 1.3.002.

District Offices.---The district level of WPA administration was established as a means of dividing states of widely varying area, population, and work relief loads into manageable operating units of more nearly equal size and responsibility. The WPA districts, therefore, are administrative units made up of groups of counties on the basis of population, area, work loads, and accessibility to an urban headquarters. In 1940 there were 278 such districts in the United States. Two states (New York and Texas) had as many as twenty, while several others had but one. In the latter cases a single office served as both state and district headquarters.

The District Manager, aided by his divisional directors and numerous supervisors, is responsible for the actual operation of all WPA projects in his area. His office, therefore, is managerial in character, and is concerned with the assignment of workers to specific projects, the transmission of payroll records and all project reports, the administration of workers' training programs, the requisitioning of supplies, and the recruiting of project supervisors and administrative employees throughout the District.

The individual District Manager may also exercise a good influence in his area by assisting county and local governments in developing a reserve shelf of desirable and eligible undertakings for future operation as public work projects.

The direction of project activity at specific job locations is performed by district and area supervisors (non-relief, technical specialists) who, aided by unit foremen, guide and inspect the day-to-day operations of groups of certified (relief) workers.

General Rules and Policies of the WPA

The library assistance program, as but one small sector of the total work program, necessarily operates within certain important limitations which have nothing to do with its own objective of increasing the availability of tax-supported public library service. This section discusses the four major groups of WPA regulations which apply to all projects alike. They are: project requirements, employment and personnel, finance, and sponsorship.

Project requirements.--In considering applications for the use of its funds, the WPA has three devices to guide it in making consistent decisions. The first is its project method, which requires the submission and central approval of detailed specifications for each proposal. Secondly, it can rely upon statutory limitations as specified in succeeding appropriation acts to enforce certain agency regulations. Finally, it has developed a detailed "Guide to Project Eligibility" (known as "Operating Procedure G-1") as a codification of its policies concerning permissible activities for project operation.

The original specifications for WPA projects stated that they should be useful, low in non-labor cost, high in their use of relief labor, adapted to the abilities of the available workers, capable of prompt inauguration, and more or less self-liquidating.⁸ To these have been added such other requirements as the following:

1. All project activity must be sponsored by a public body (other than the WPA), and its benefits must be made available to the general public.
2. A project may not perform current maintenance work (snow removal, seasonal street repair, etc.) nor activities customarily carried on by the sponsor, except where such activities constitute a real addition or extension to services normally rendered.
3. No project which competes with private industry may be undertaken. (It was this rule which led to the curtailment of bookbinding on library projects after 1938.)
4. Service projects should be organized on a state-wide basis wherever greater economy and efficiency of operation will result.⁹

The specific kinds of eligible activities cited in the appropriating acts include the construction of roads, public buildings, various utility systems, and airports, the operation of recreational and cultural projects and training projects for domestic service and for national defense industries.

Library activities are mentioned in several different sections of the WPA's "Guide to Project Eligibility." Among the

⁸Macmahon, Millett, and Ogden, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁹Paraphrased from the WPA's "Guide to Project Eligibility" and other agency-wide rules and regulations.

specific types of work cited are:

- the compilation of bibliographies (section 45)
- book repair (section 46)
- transcribing books into Braille (section 47)
- library service to educational projects (section 48)
- public library extension (section 55)
- the preparation of newspaper indexes (section 61)

This study is chiefly concerned with the activities carried on under the provisions of section 55 (library extension).

Administratively all projects are divided into two groups: (1) federal projects (those sponsored and directed by regular federal agencies, with almost no WPA supervision); and (2) non-federal projects (those sponsored by state, county, or local public bodies, and administered by WPA supervisory personnel). This second group accounts for 80 or 90 per cent of all project activity, including the library assistance program.

Employment and personnel.---In the selection and training of workers, in wage and hour rates, and in conditions of employment library projects are also subject to general agency regulations, some of which are fixed by Congress, while others are determined by the WPA. Among these rules are the following:

1. All WPA officers receiving salaries of \$5,000 or more must be appointed by the President with senatorial approval.
2. No person a candidate for a public office may be employed.
3. No WPA administrative or supervisory employee may engage in political activity.
4. State WPA administrative employees shall be recruited from bona fide citizens of the state.
5. All relief employees shall be certified as to need by an authorized local public welfare agency (or by the WPA).
6. No alien, Communist, or Nazi Bund member shall be employed by the WPA.
7. Persons refusing offers of private employment may not be employed as certified workers on WPA projects.
8. Preference in selecting project personnel shall be given to war veterans and widows of war veterans.
9. All relief workers (except veterans or veteran's widows) shall be removed from WPA payrolls after 18 months of continuous project employment. If still eligible for relief work after 30 days they may be re-hired if their services are still needed.

10. No relief employee may work more than 130 hours a month, more than eight hours a day, or more than forty hours a week.
11. Rates of pay and monthly earning schedules shall be fixed by the WPA Commissioner (based on an average security wage of \$50 a month).
12. No worker shall be discriminated against because of race, religion, or political affiliation.
13. No project may recruit more than 10 per cent of its personnel from non-relief candidates.¹⁰

The determination of employment quotas for the various states is said to have been based on the following general formula: 40 per cent on state population, 40 per cent on the amount of unemployment within the state, and 20 per cent on the discretion of WPA headquarters.¹¹

Individual workers are assigned to specific projects on the basis of their work histories and their particular aptitudes, in order to preserve such trained skills as they may already possess. Their rate of pay is determined according to their occupational classification and the relative responsibility of their duties. In its payroll classification¹² the WPA designates workers as "unskilled," "intermediate," "skilled," or "professional or technical." Thus, "Junior Library Clerks" and "Book Cleaners" are "unskilled," "Senior Library Clerks" are "intermediate," "Library Assistants" are "skilled," and "Librarians" are "professional and technical" workers. (College education and professional library training or two years of professional experience are the qualifications for the rank of "Librarian.")

Standards for administrative and supervisory positions are also clearly defined in this job classification. Thus, a State Library Project Supervisor must be a graduate of an accredited library school with successful public library administrative

¹⁰Paraphrased from successive congressional acts providing funds for the work relief program, and rulings of the Commissioner.

¹¹Macmahon, Millett, and Ogden, op. cit., p. 223.

¹²U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Rules and Regulations Governing Employment" (Operating Procedure E-9), Appendix A.

experience.

Finance.---WPA finance has two major aspects which affect project operation: the acquisition and allocation of over-all support, and the control of project expenditures.

From the beginning the acquisition of adequate regular support for WPA projects has been hampered by the unwillingness of government leaders to admit publicly that work relief was more than an emergency or temporary problem. Thus the WPA has had to depend for its existence upon unpredictable amounts of support obtained from Congress by direct Presidential request at irregular intervals. In practice lump sums have been appropriated to operate the WPA for a specific period; then, before the end of this period deficiency appropriations have had to be made to supplement these funds. It is not surprising, therefore, that the WPA, uncertain of its own very existence from year to year, has found it difficult to get the states to develop long-range plans for using relief workers.

The control over project expenditures is regulated in part by Congress and partly by rules of the Commissioner. Originally Congress specified statutory allocations for eight broad classes of projects, but this form of fiscal administration proved to be inadequate to meet changing needs;¹³ and after 1938 the "ear marking" of funds for specific activities was discontinued.

The major Congressional controls over WPA expenditures include the following four provisions:

1. No state may ordinarily spend more than \$6 per man-month per year of WPA funds for other than labor (except on projects designated as essential to national defense).
2. Within any state the sponsors' contribution to WPA projects must amount to at least 25 per cent of their total cost (except for projects designated as essential to national defense).
3. Administrative expenses for WPA projects shall not exceed specific statutory limitations for salaries, communication, travel, publishing, and binding. (These amounts usually run to 3 or 4 per cent of all WPA funds).
4. No Federal building project may cost more than \$100,000; and the WPA's share of no non-federal building project may

¹³Macmahon, Millet, and Ogden, op. cit., p. 128.

exceed \$100,000.¹⁴

Detailed regulations concerning timekeeping, the preparation of payrolls, vouchers, inventories, and accounts for WPA projects are set forth in the agency's official manual of rules.¹⁵

The accounting and disbursement of WPA funds is handled by the U.S. Treasury Department, which reports annually on program expenditures and the state of WPA finance.¹⁶

Sponsorship.—The device of sponsorship was established originally to fix responsibility for project planning at the state and local level and to assure regular, non-federal participation in the cost of project operation. Sponsors of WPA construction projects are required to pay a definite, substantial share of their cost; and sponsors of non-construction undertakings were originally expected to furnish technical supervision, equipment, and supplies.¹⁷ In recent years, however, sponsors of professional and service projects have not had to carry the entire burden of providing supervision and supplies.

A sponsor may directly supervise project operations (as in cases where a few relief workers assist an established library), or project activity may be directed largely by qualified WPA supervisors (the usual arrangement on state-wide library projects). In general, the latter practice appears to be better suited to conditions of efficient project operation, provided the objective of assisting the sponsor is rigidly followed. Most project sponsors, busy with the duties of their own offices, function best in a planning and advisory capacity, leaving routine administration to the WPA.

Two statutory regulations serve to assure a minimum of regular non-federal participation in project operating costs.

¹⁴Paraphrased from successive congressional acts providing funds for the work relief program.

¹⁵U.S. Work Projects Administration, Manual of Rules and Regulations, Vol. IV (loose-leaf).

¹⁶U.S. President, Report of the President of the United States to the Congress, Showing the Status of Funds and Operations under the Emergency Relief Appropriation Acts for the Fiscal Years 1935 to ----, Inclusive. . . . (Washington: Government Printing Office, ----) (Prepared by the Treasury Department).

¹⁷U.S. Works Progress Administration, "Guide to Project Eligibility" (Operating Procedure G-1), Section 23.

The first specifies that sponsors shall bear at least 25 per cent of the cost of every state's projects. The second limits to \$6.00 per man-month the amount of WPA funds any state may spend for non-labor purposes.

From 1936 to 1941 the total sponsors' contribution to WPA projects rose from 10 per cent of all project costs to almost 31 per cent. In 1936 these contributions accounted for 40 per cent of all non-labor expenditures. By 1940 this proportion had increased to almost 80 per cent.¹⁸

The WPA Library Assistance Program

This section discusses the administration of WPA library projects by describing the role of the Library Service Section, by explaining the program's objectives and activities, and by describing the operation of a state-wide library project.

By 1941 the library assistance activities of the WPA had been largely co-ordinated into a single program, operated as a series of state-wide library service projects. Like many other non-construction activities, therefore, library projects are customarily sponsored by a single agency in each state and are operated on a state-wide basis with numerous local bodies acting as co-sponsors.

Administratively all library projects are under the jurisdiction of the individual State WPA Administrator and his Director of Community Service Programs. Workers on individual units are responsible to their area supervisors, who, in turn, report to their District Office. As can be seen from Figures 10 and 12, library projects constitute a separate unit within the Public Activities section of the Community Service Programs division at all levels of the administrative hierarchy.

The Library Service Section.--The Library Service Section in Washington is a "staff" or advisory agency, and therefore does not itself operate any library projects. It was established in 1938 as a unit within the Central Administration, to serve as a clearing-house for all WPA library assistance activities and to render field services to library projects throughout the nation. Specifically it is empowered to provide professional advisory

¹⁸U.S. Federal Works Agency, Second Annual Report, 1941 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 443.

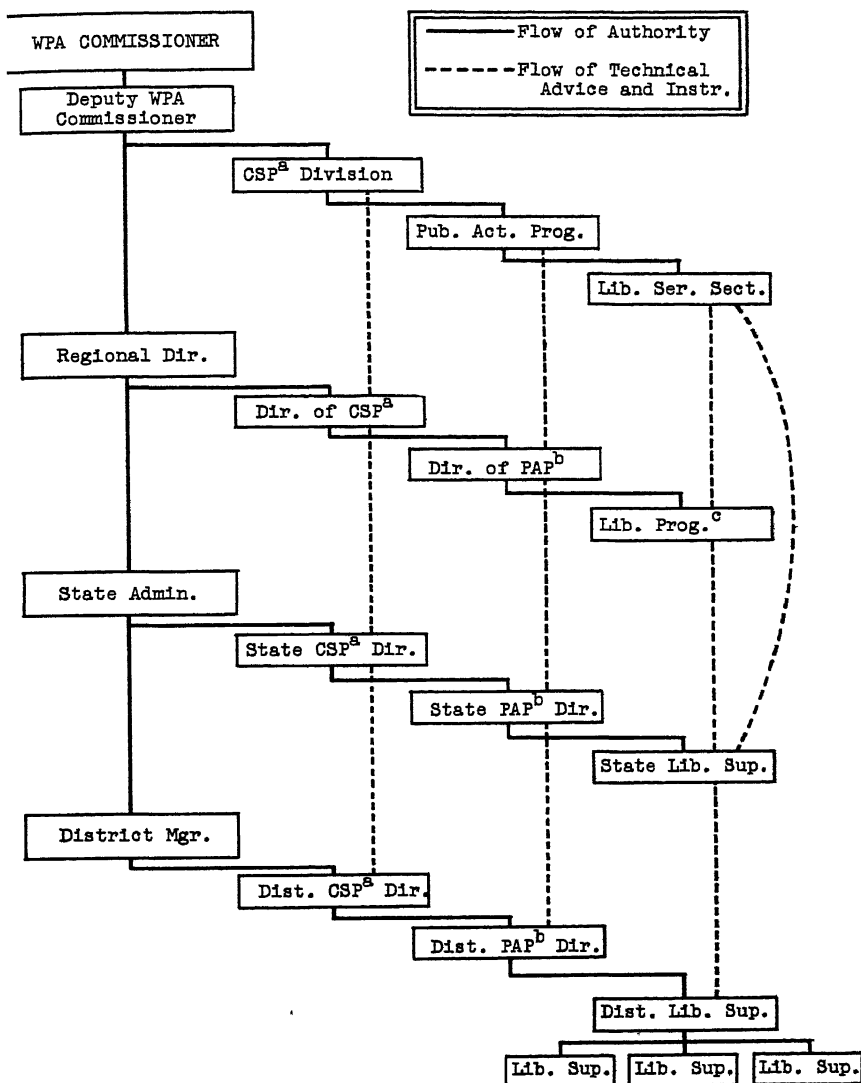


Fig. 12.--The status of library projects in the WPA hierarchy

^aCSP refers to the Community Service Programs Division.

^bPAP refers to Public Activities Programs.

^cUsually there is no regional officer for the library program.

service to individual projects and sponsors, to assist in reviewing library project proposals, to interpret WPA regulations affecting libraries, and to further the development of uniform objectives, policies, procedures, and standards of performance for library projects.

As a "staff" rather than a "line" office, the Library Service Section affects the development of specific library projects largely by means of advice, suggestion, and diplomatic persuasion, since individual projects are ultimately controlled by a State Administrator and his "CSP" division chief. However, in his consultative capacity (in recommending the approval of project proposals, in developing procedures for project operation, and in conferring with state sponsors and supervisors) the Director of the Library Service Section actually exercises a considerable influence over library project organization and operation.

The routine work of this section is concerned with such matters as the solicitation and analysis of reports on library project activity, the study of administrative problems of individual state-wide projects, the dissemination of information concerning experiments with new library extension techniques, the preparation of bookmobile specifications, contractual agreements, and reporting forms, the organization of supervisors' conferences, and the planning of workers' training programs.

During 1940-41 the staff of the Library Service Section included four persons, as follows:

1. The Director, who officially represents the section and is held responsible for all of its services and recommendations. He personally recommends the approval or revision of all library project proposals.
2. The Assistant to the Director, who renders advisory assistance to individual states on library extension practice. She is acting head of the section in the Director's absence, and shares with him the responsibility of visiting the various states to assist sponsors and WPA officials in solving local problems of project organization and administration.
3. A Bibliographical Specialist, who assists the states in organizing projects for indexing newspapers, compiling bibliographies and union catalogs. He develops standards and procedures for such work, and is preparing a comprehensive bibliography of all WPA bibliographical undertakings.
4. An Administrative Assistant, who reviews library project

proposals for form, completeness, cost estimates, and conformity to WPA regulations. He also advises the states with regard to reporting techniques, the requisition of books and equipment, and bookmobile design.

In the exercise of its advisory function the Library Service Section has issued a number of circulars and manuals designed to assist the states in developing their own programs according to sound library procedure.¹⁹ In these publications and in several articles²⁰ prepared by the Director of the Section the objectives, policies, and operating procedures of the entire WPA library assistance program are set forth. These statements clearly reveal the characteristics of the Library Section's pattern of extending library service by demonstration and provide much of the information upon which this study's interpretation of the program depends.

Objectives and eligible activities.---The basic objective of all state-wide WPA library service projects is officially de-

¹⁹"WPA Library Service Circular" series, issued irregularly, as part of the "WPA Technical Series of Publications," as follows:

- No. 1. Union Cataloging Projects (April 1, 1940).
- No. 2. The Selection and Administration of Project-Owned Books (February 18, 1941).
- No. 3. Training Manual (March 13, 1941).
- No. 4. Central Cataloging Service (October 31, 1941).

Also: Preliminary Supervisor's Manual for the Operation of a WPA Statewide Library Service Project (September, 1940). (Planographed.)
 "Suggestions for Preparation of a Statewide Public Library Project Application." (Typewritten.)
 Section 55 in the WPA "Guide to Project Eligibility" (Operating Procedure G-1).
 Section 20 in "The Operation of Specific Professional and Service Projects" (Operating Procedure G-5).

²⁰E. A. Chapman, "Theory and Practice in the Organization and Operation of WPA State-wide Library Service Projects" (Revised, February, 1940). (Typewritten.)

E. A. Chapman, Statewide Library Service Projects (A paper presented before the Southeastern Library Association Conference, October 25, 1940). (Planographed.)

E. A. Chapman, "State Agencies and the WPA," National Association of State Libraries, Proceedings, 1937-1938, September, 1937, pp. 30-32.

E. A. Chapman, "WPA and Rural Libraries," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXXII (October 1, 1938), 703-9.

E. A. Chapman, "WPA Library Demonstrations Serve Millions of Readers," ALA Bulletin, XXXIV (April, 1940), 225-31.

defined as "assisting established library agencies in stimulating local reception of complete and permanent library service as a regular public function."²¹ In a corollary statement the Director of the Library Service Section, discussing project aims, has pointed out that the program also:

. . . . 'has the professional objective of demonstrating accepted state plans for the logical development of statewide library service. This objective resolves itself into that of reaching the unserved increment of a state's population, which is largely rural. The statewide project may be viewed as a laboratory for demonstrating service theories and developing practical operators in the field of library extension. The program is intended to supply a tool for librarians. In other words, the project belongs to librarians and must enjoy their active participation if the objectives sought are to be obtained."²²

The WPA library program, therefore, is in no sense either an independent, federally operated system of library service nor a plan for permanently subsidizing locally administered libraries. It is strictly an assistance program, designed to help existing library authorities in extending library service supported by state and local funds.

Among the specific activities in which a state-wide library project may engage are the following:

1. Assist in reference work.
2. Preserve and repair library materials (except textbooks).
3. Conduct story hours and reading clubs.
4. Rearrange library collections.
5. Check collections against shelf lists.
6. Assist in catalog revision and compilation of union catalogs.
7. Check, catalog and/or list duplicate library materials.
8. Assist in compiling book lists and arranging library displays.
9. Prepare pamphlet, clipping, map, picture, and photo collections.

²¹U.S. Work Projects Administration, "The Operation of Specific Professional and Service Projects" (Operating Procedure G-5), Section 55.

²²Edward A. Chapman, "Theory and Practice in the Organization and Operation of WPA State-wide Library Service Projects" (revised February, 1940). (Typewritten.)

10. Assist in circulation work and in the preparation of books for circulation only in connection with the expansion or extension of existing library services.
11. Assist in keeping libraries open longer hours.
12. Compile biographic and supplementary indexes, and special and miscellaneous bibliographies.²³

How a state-wide library project operates.---The foregoing portion of this chapter has employed the analytical method to characterize the organization of the WPA and the Library Service Section. This section treats the operating policies and techniques of the library program by means of a synthesis. That is, it presents them in context, by describing the organization and operation of an hypothetical state-wide library service project, which constitutes in a sense a projection of the Library Service Section's plan of library assistance.

Let us suppose that a state already has many locally-sponsored projects, assisting individual public libraries and operating independent lending stations in communities without public libraries. The state library agency realizes that most of these projects are too scattered, too small, and too lacking in competent supervision and local participation to lead to permanent, tax-supported library service. Accordingly, with the full cooperation of the state library association, the state agency agrees to sponsor a state-wide WPA library project, to supersede these numerous local projects. This single project will concentrate all available WPA assistance on library service demonstrations directed at the establishment of permanent county or regional libraries.

The state agency, drawing upon its surveys of existing services and its long-range plans for state-wide library development, prepares a proposal describing the intended scope and emphasis of the project, estimating its cost and the amount of relief employment it will create, and stating specifically what the sponsor will contribute to its support and supervision.

This application is then submitted to the state WPA office, which, after studying it, submits it to the Central Admin-

²³U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Guide to Project Eligibility" (Operating Procedure G-1), Section 55 (June, 1941, revision).

istration in Washington. Here it is registered in the Project Control and Clearance Section and sent to the appropriate technical adviser (in this instance the chief of the Library Service Section) for review. If it receives his approval its employment and financial estimates and its legality are then checked and it goes to the Commissioner for final authorization.

When the project is officially approved, the State Administrator appoints a State Library Project Supervisor. The latter then recruits a staff of qualified field supervisors and requisitions relief help to operate the service.

Library demonstration areas are selected with regard to relative need, citizen demand, and their potential ability to support library service. Intensive surveys of these areas are made to discover the best basis for developing a permanent area-wide system of service around the facilities of existing local libraries. Each supervisor then arranges the details of the program within her area with local library representatives and interested civic leaders. She helps with the organization of citizens' library associations, negotiates agreements with county and municipal officers for regular financial contributions to the demonstration, and assists in organizing book drives to increase the scope and variety of materials for circulation.

The book stock of a library service demonstration is obtained from three major sources. The WPA furnishes a limited number of new volumes for project use, as "tools for demonstration." These are selected, ordered, cataloged, and distributed to individual demonstration areas by the project's central processing office, under the direction of a trained supervisor. According to WPA regulations the books purchased with federal funds must be chosen from standard book selection guides, in a proportion not to exceed 35 per cent children's literature, and adult titles to include not more than 25 or 30 per cent fiction. Additional volumes are usually loaned to the project by the sponsor and by local libraries co-operating in the demonstration. Finally, gift books and titles purchased with funds raised locally round out the collection of available materials.

Bookmobiles needed to bring books to rural residents and to exchange rotating deposit collections may also sometimes be obtained with WPA assistance. The WPA may rent a chassis for this purpose if a co-sponsor will supply a suitable body for it

and will agree to maintain the entire unit after a limited period of demonstration.

When book collections and equipment are ready, workers assigned, initial deposit stations located, and bookmobile routes tentatively scheduled, lending service is begun. Arrangements for rotating book stocks, filling special requests, and reconditioning worn volumes are made, borrowing rules are announced, and an in-service training program for project workers is set in operation. Conducted by qualified supervisors, this program includes "on-the-job" training in specific tasks and routines, and periodic instruction in area-wide group meetings or training institutes. Usually formal instruction is supplemented by printed information and illustrative materials contained in a workers' manual or library project handbook.²⁴

Once in operation a WPA library service demonstration bears many resemblances to an established county library. However, it differs from such a library in one important regard. As a temporary undertaking it has the object, not merely of giving the best possible service, but of so demonstrating the advantages of free, area-wide library service that the communities benefited will provide tax support for a permanent library program when WPA assistance is withdrawn. It is therefore the policy of the WPA to set a time limit on its demonstrations, in order to avoid merely subsidizing a service of primarily local benefit.

Since a WPA library service demonstration is intended to achieve a definite goal in a limited period of time, one important phase of library project activity is its program of public relations. It is the responsibility of project supervisors to show the citizens of demonstration communities how they may legally establish a sound, tax-supported library system. By explaining to influential civic organizations the cost, benefits, and procedure of establishing permanent library service, and by helping them to plan and carry on well-directed local publicity, these supervisors usually play an important role in determining the effectiveness of demonstration assistance.

The crucial phase of a library demonstration is reached

²⁴Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, and South Carolina all have developed such handbooks, based on their own particular needs.

when, after a reasonable period of operation, the time comes to determine whether the service is to be continued with permanent local support. Sometimes county commissioners can take the necessary action, upon petition of a group of citizens. In other cases (or if the commissioners are unwilling to act on their own authority) the establishment of an area-wide library is made the issue of a public election. After such a vote has been taken, the WPA may assist the community in organizing its permanent service system, in drawing up sound contractual agreements with existing libraries, and in staffing its lending centers temporarily. However, if the issue is decisively defeated, the WPA will customarily withdraw its entire demonstration facilities. In cases where there is still a likelihood that tax support may be won by its continuance, a demonstration may be extended for another specified period, if local contributions are increased and there is evidence that greater local effort will be made to establish the service on a permanent basis.

When a demonstration is withdrawn, its facilities are then made available to another area. In general, it is a policy of the WPA to concentrate its effort in areas best able to support a sound program, so that by increasing the number of counties with service, their example may facilitate the establishment of state aid to equalize library opportunity among all counties. Those counties too poor or too small to support adequate library systems of their own are urged to arrange with adjoining areas, for service on a bi-county or regional basis.

Review and Appraisal

This chapter now considers the administrative soundness of the WPA library assistance program in relation to principles of administrative organization and its technical soundness in relation to accepted library extension practice.

The Administrative Soundness of the Program

The literature on scientific management contains no single statement of principles that is accepted by all scholars in this field. Several publications on administrative theory discuss such principles; but each differs from the others in its terminology, definitions, or arrangement of principles. This study, therefore,

arbitrarily selects one of them, a statement by Floyd W. Reeves,²⁵ for use as a framework against which to consider the administrative organization of the WPA library assistance program.

The seven principles of administrative organization are stated by Mr. Reeves as follows:

1. Administrative organization should provide for unity of management.
2. Effective administrative organization is a hierarchy.
3. Administrative organization should provide a limited span of control for all officials.
4. Administrative organization should provide for the delegation of authority commensurate with responsibility.
5. Administrative organization should provide for the grouping of employees on the basis of homogeneity of activities.
6. Administrative organization should provide for the performance of line and staff functions.
7. Administrative organization should provide facilities for co-ordination.

No claim is made that these include all possible principles of good management. The author does submit, however, that some recognition of those he presents is a requisite of effective administration in any sizable organization. This study considers the extent to which each of them is observed in the organization of the WPA and its library assistance program.

Unity of management.--The WPA as a whole achieves unity of management by centering responsibility for the entire organization in a single Commissioner. The library assistance program, however, consisting merely of a group of independent state-wide projects, has no such administrative unity at the national level. It has a central representative, or spokesman, in the Director of the Library Service Section; but he is only a "staff" officer, not an administrator in full control of library activities. At the state level, on the other hand, there is unity of management in the library program, for responsibility and authority for all library assistance centers in the State Library Project Supervisor

²⁵Floyd W. Reeves, "Some General Principles of Administrative Organization" in G. B. Joeckel (ed.), Current Issues in Library Administration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 1-21.

and ultimately in the State Administrator.

Since individual program objectives are only incidental to the WPA's major purpose, any national administration of projects by type would merely disrupt over-all WPA management at the state level. In a chapter on "The Rival Claims of Hierarchy and Specialty" Macmahon and his colleagues present an excellent analysis of this very problem.²⁶ They point out how the Federal Arts Project (the outstanding experiment in functional unity of project management) played havoc with state and local project administration until its activities were reorganized to fit into the regular WPA hierarchy.

Hierarchy.---Today WPA activities are organized on a clearly defined hierarchical basis. As can be seen from Figure 11 the line of direct authority flows from the Commissioner through each level to the District Managers. Moreover, its pattern of horizontal departmentation is repeated at each of its four administrative levels. As a safeguard against too rigid an organization, however, the determination of relationships among state and district officials is left to the discretion of each State Administrator.

Span of control.---The limitation of individual relationships to a workable size has also been considered in the WPA organization. The Regional Offices of the WPA were created primarily to reduce the span of the Central Administration. Similarly, the District Offices were established because most states would present too great a span of authority if a single administrator were charged with the direct supervision of all local project operations. State Library Project Supervisors also limit their personal span of control to an effective size by delegating to district and area assistants the immediate charge of individual demonstrations.

Authority commensurate with responsibility.---As a rule, when responsibility is delegated within the WPA it is accompanied by commensurate authority. It is true that State Library Project Supervisors, responsible for over-all project operation, do not have complete power over wages, hours, working conditions, and the selection and tenure of workers. These matters are handled by other divisions in accord with agency-wide regulations. However, this division of function is applied to all projects alike;

²⁶Macmahon, Millett, and Ogden, op. cit., pp. 244 ff.

so program supervisors are held accountable only for the technical achievement of their projects within these recognized limitations. District and area supervisors are held responsible for the success or failure of the individual demonstrations in their charge. They are usually granted broad authority to develop day-to-day operations to the limit of their ingenuity and managerial ability.

Departmentation on the basis of homogeneity.--The various subdivisions within the WPA organization are grouped on several different bases of homogeneity. The major hierarchical levels represent departmentation by territorial or geographical boundaries. Two of the horizontal divisions (Employment and Finance) are based on homogeneity of function. The Divisions of Operations (Engineering and Project Control) and Community Service Programs, on the other hand, while both concerned with project planning and operation, are separated according to homogeneity of groups served (men versus women) or type of project (construction versus non-construction).

The Community Service Programs Division, established to provide for projects whose only original claim to similarity was their non-construction character, naturally resembles a pot-pourri of basically unrelated activities (see Fig. 12). The director of this division is expected to understand the objectives and needs of such diverse concerns as sewing, recreation, historical records, school lunch, library service, surplus commodity, and museum projects! As a result, the activities most familiar to the director may receive disproportionate official encouragement, while others may be slighted. Fortunately, however, the subgrouping of projects into Public Activities, Research and Records, and Welfare programs arranges divisional undertakings according to more apparent homogeneity.

Line and staff functions.--Unlike most business or governmental organizations the WPA is an agency whose day-to-day activity necessitates the extensive conduct of undertakings which bear no inherent relationship to its primary function. The administration of a federal assistance program requires a strong "line" organization, which the WPA has developed in its central-regional-state-district hierarchy. However, since its operations consist mainly of undertakings requiring many specialized skills for their efficient conduct and supervision, it has had to provide "staff" officers with sufficient authority to assure all projects of com-

petent technical direction.

The WPA's deliberate provision for dual oversight for each type of program represents a solution admirably suited to its particular needs. By distinguishing clearly between "administrative direction" and "technical supervision" it provides both "line" and "staff" officers with the kind of authority each needs. Thus, since administrative authority is reserved to "line" officials, a district library supervisor is responsible to the District Office. In technical matters, however, he confers directly with the State Library Project Supervisor for advice and assistance in planning project operations. At each level of the WPA hierarchy "staff" officers assist the administrative chief in "housekeeping" functions. Reporting, accounting, investigating abuses, planning standard procedures, developing personnel programs, preparing publicity material, and analyzing statistics are some of the "staff" activities thus provided for by the WPA.

Throughout the WPA the one "staff" function least well developed is that of self-evaluation and applied research. As a busy organization, ostensibly temporary in character, the WPA has naturally emphasized getting its job done over all other considerations. However, if the WPA is continued it should take stock of its accomplishment, re-examine its objectives, and seriously consider its future role (in a post-war economy), not only with regard to work relief, but to library assistance and each of its other types of project activity.

Co-ordination.--Horizontal co-ordination is achieved in the WPA by means of conferences among division chiefs at each level of the hierarchy. Vertical co-ordination is facilitated throughout the agency by the arrangement for dual oversight, by the field operations of central representatives and regional officers, by the preparation and distribution of central and state office orders and news letters (including the Manual of Rules and Regulations), and by conferences of divisional leaders at different levels. At the state level similar devices are used for co-ordination; and through his divisional directors each State Administrator tries to co-ordinate all WPA activity in the state into a single, integrated program.

Within the limits of its authority the Library Service Section has succeeded well in co-ordinating the project efforts of certain individual states. In other instances it has not been

able to obtain the co-operation it has desired. However, it is fully cognizant of the importance of its co-ordinating role; and it would readily extend its performance of this function if it could but obtain the necessary funds and personnel for research, publication, and travel.

The Technical Soundness of the Program

No principles of library extension comparable to Professor Reeves' "principles of administrative organization" have yet appeared in the literature of library science. Lacking such criteria this study has developed its own list of precepts or accepted demonstration techniques in terms of which the technical or professional soundness of the WPA library assistance program may be considered. This list, called a "code of best practice," is based on a comparative analysis of the five library assistance programs which together comprise the chief examples of library extension by demonstration prior to the WPA. The five undertakings thus studied are:

1. The Louisiana Library Demonstration, 1925-1930, assisted by \$75,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, to promote library development by demonstrating what can be done in a single state with financial assistance administered by a state library commission.²⁷
2. The Fraser Valley (British Columbia) Library Demonstration, 1930-1935, assisted with \$100,000 from the Carnegie Corporation, to demonstrate the advantages of a district library plan, using the principles of the county library system of Great Britain and of the United States.²⁸

²⁷ Louisiana. The Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration, 1925-1930 (New York City: League of Library Commissions, 1931).

²⁸ No single, comprehensive report of this demonstration has been published. Various aspects of its progress, however, have been treated by H. G. Stewart, C. K. Morrison, and R. B. Garrick in issues of the Library Journal and the Pacific Northwest Library Association Quarterly from 1936 to 1941.

H. G. Stewart, "Regional Libraries in B.C.," LJ, LXI (November 15, 1936), 876-78.

H. G. Stewart, "Regional Library Development" in L. R. Wilson (ed.), Library Trends (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937), pp. 87-104.

C. K. Morrison, "Library Problems in the Fraser Valley," PNLA Q, II (October, 1937), 40-41.

C. K. Morrison, "Progress and Poverty in Fraser Valley,

3. The Rosenwald County Library Demonstration in the South, 1930-1936, a program whereby eleven counties in seven southern states were to demonstrate the benefits of county-wide service (assisted by approximately \$500,000 from the Rosenwald Fund).²⁹
4. The Prince Edward Island Library Demonstration, 1933-1936, assisted by \$108,000 from the Carnegie Corporation to facilitate the establishment of permanent, tax-supported, area-wide library service throughout the province, as an example for all three of the Maritime Provinces.³⁰
5. The Tennessee Valley Authority Library Program, 1933 to date, a program whereby the TVA contracts with existing library authorities for service to its workers at and near its dam sites, and thus assists valley communities in several states to develop permanent, tax-supported library systems.³¹

All five of these programs were assisted substantially by "outside" funds, and all were aimed at the development of permanent, area-wide, tax-supported library service systems. In detail they naturally differ considerably. However, together they are sufficiently alike in technique to suggest the following "code" as representing the essential characteristics of sound practice in extending library service by demonstration:

"Code of Best Practice" for a Library
Demonstration Program

1. A sound library service demonstration should have the clearly defined objective of establishing a permanent library system supported with public funds.
2. A demonstration program should have a competent librarian as its directing head or executive secretary.

LJ, LXIV (October 15, 1939), 781-84.

C. K. Morrison, "Democratic Control of the Regional Library in B.C.," PNLA Q, IV (April, 1940), 93.

R. B. Garrick, "Fraser Valley Union Library; An Appraisal," PNLA Q, VI (October, 1941), 42-45.

²⁹Louis R. Wilson and Edward A. Wight, County Library Service in the South (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935).

³⁰The Carnegie Library Demonstration in Prince Edward Island, Canada, 1933-1936 (Charlottetown, P.E.I.: Prince Edward Island Libraries, 1936).

³¹Mary U. Rothrock and Helen M. Harris, "A Regional Library in the Tennessee Valley," ALA Bulletin, XXXV (December, 1941), 658-64.

3. The director of a library demonstration should have an advisory committee to assist in program planning.
4. The administration of a program affecting many states should be decentralized.
5. The function of the assisting agency should be to provide expert technical guidance in program organization and supervision, and decreasing financial aid for books and personnel.
6. The communities assisted should provide space, equipment, and an increasing financial share in the enterprise, and should work to obtain tax support for a permanent library system.
7. A thorough survey of the area to be assisted is an essential prerequisite to planning a sound library demonstration.
8. A demonstration should work through and with state and local library authorities to develop an integrated, area-wide system based on existing library facilities.
9. Contractual agreements between the assisting agency and the participating libraries and local governments should be drawn up at the beginning of a library demonstration.
10. A library demonstration should have a definite time limit.
11. The territory selected for a library demonstration should constitute a natural service area that is economically able to support a permanent library system.
12. A demonstration should provide impartial, area-wide library service to all citizens alike.
13. Every library demonstration should have a citizens' library committee to sponsor the movement for permanent library support.
14. A library service demonstration should co-operate closely with other local civic and social organizations.
15. A demonstration should focus attention continually upon its ultimate objective by maintaining a strong program of public relations.

These fifteen precepts are by no means inclusive. Deliberately omitted are such details of routine operation as the policy of rotating deposits regularly, and the provision of titles on special request. In the attempt to emphasize broad principles rather than internal organizational procedures, the centralization of technical operations, characteristic of county or regional demonstrations, was also omitted. Moreover, the provision of in-service training, so important a factor in the WPA program, is

not mentioned because the conditions which made it necessary in this instance are not an inherent part of the demonstration method.

The WPA library assistance program is now considered briefly in relation to each of the precepts cited above.

1. A clearly defined objective.---Like the Louisiana, Fraser Valley, Prince Edward Island, and TVA library programs, the WPA library assistance program had the clearly specified objective of facilitating the development of permanent, area-wide, tax-supported library service (see p. 118).

2. A competent director.---Also like the four programs mentioned, WPA-assisted library service demonstrations have been developed by competent leadership, both in Washington and, with few exceptions, at the state and district levels. The Rosenwald county library program, on the other hand, was rather hastily undertaken, and was seriously hampered in achieving permanent, measurable results by its failure to appoint a competent director to co-ordinate and supervise the development of its several county projects.³²

3. A professional advisory committee.---The outstanding example of an advisory committee of library leaders for a specific library program is the Tennessee Valley Library Council, organized by the TVA to assist in planning for a more effective co-ordination of library development throughout the region. Its program, together with its specific findings and recommendations³³ provide a commendable illustration of the appropriate function of such a body.

The WPA library assistance program, as but one of many concerns of the WPA, has not had a separate advisory committee of its own.³⁴ However, the WPA has what is known as the National

³²Wilson and Wight, op. cit., p. 200.

³³Tennessee Valley Authority, "Tennessee Valley Library Council, Conference, March 27 and 28, 1941, Knoxville, Tennessee" (Knoxville, Tennessee: TVA Training Division, 1941). (Multi-graphed.)

³⁴On March 3, 1942, a National Advisory Committee for WPA library activities was appointed by Assistant Commissioner Florence Kerr, to advise the WPA in redirecting its library program in relation to the war. The committee consists of five library leaders.

Advisory Committee for Community Service Projects, whose membership includes a library representative, the Executive Secretary of the American Library Association. When the group meets, this spokesman for libraries brings librarians' observations on the demonstration program to the attention of the entire committee.³⁵ Informally, the A.L.A. secretary also confers from time to time with the Director of the Library Service Section with regard to the formulation of program objectives and policies. At the state level several state-wide programs have project advisory committees appointed by their respective state library associations. Finally, within the WPA the required device of public sponsorship assures each project of the assistance of at least one non-WPA library leader in planning program development.

4. Decentralized administration.--Director David E. Lillienthal, in discussing the organizational policy of the Tennessee Valley Authority, clearly explains the dangers inherent in the centralized or remote administration of community services.³⁶ He describes the TVA "grass roots" policy of placing responsibility for both planning and action, formulation and execution, in the hands of competent leaders at the scene of program operation. Only in this manner, he declares, can plans involving the general welfare of an entire regional population be co-ordinated and adapted successfully to local conditions and parochial customs and traditions.

In the WPA library assistance program its administration on a state-wide project basis, together with its policy of delegating considerable planning responsibility to individual supervisors, facilitates the achievement of this same flexibility in fitting project developments to local conditions and needs. Only a program that is sensitive to provincial mores and predispositions can avoid arousing the suspicion (sometimes the downright

³⁵U.S. Work Projects Administration, The National Advisory Committee for Community Service Projects, "Conference, held Tuesday Morning, May 21, 1940" and "Conference, held Tuesday Afternoon, Wednesday, and Thursday, May 21, 22, 23, 1940" (Washington, D.C., 1940). (Two stenotype reports, mimeographed.)

Carl H. Milam, "WPA State-wide Library Projects: Observations Based on Comments of Librarians." (Mimeographed, 1940.)

³⁶David E. Lillienthal, The TVA: An Experiment in the "Grass Roots" Administration of Federal Functions (Knoxville, Tennessee: The TVA, 1939).

antagonism) with which rural folk instinctively tend to regard social betterment enterprises promoted from "outside." In the case of a library program a single unit supervisor, living in the community served, can more effectively deal with rural scepticism toward "book-larnin'" and fear of government control than a corps of experts could, administering the demonstration from Washington.

5. The role of the assisting agency.--All demonstration programs are made possible by "outside" financial assistance. However, the agency providing this aid should bear in mind that its proper role is to assist the region in developing its own library system. It should not merely provide funds for books, equipment, and personnel. Its primary function should be the provision of technical advice and assistance in planning and organizing the service on a sound financial basis and at a high level of performance. In the WPA library assistance program, just as the TVA places its technical experts at the service of local groups interested in solving their own agricultural, educational, health, and recreational problems, so trained WPA demonstration supervisors help individual communities to establish sound, permanent library service systems. The major role of the assisting agency, therefore, is to show rural residents by example how they can obtain for themselves a service that hitherto has been generally available only to urban communities.

6. The role of participating communities.--Every sound demonstration program is a co-operative enterprise, dependent for its success upon the extent to which the region assisted takes an active part in its operation and support. It is essential, therefore, that each community affected by a demonstration make some tangible contribution to its success.

In the WPA library assistance program the system of local co-sponsorship assures each demonstration of at least a minimum degree of local participation. Usually this involves certain regular financial support from county, town, or village funds, and the provision of such space, heat, light, and equipment as is needed for housing library branches or deposit stations. Quite as important as this tangible aid, however, is each community's intangible or moral support of the library demonstration program. Once library service has been put in operation, those residents who want it continued permanently have an obligation to work actively to obtain the necessary tax support. Without this active

citizen participation even a liberally-assisted demonstration may fail.

7. A preliminary survey.---Just as a clear objective is an essential prerequisite to sound policy determination, so a thorough territorial survey is a necessary first step in the planning of individual library service demonstrations. Both the Fraser Valley and the Prince Edward Island library demonstrations were undertaken largely as a result of the findings of preliminary surveys.³⁷ Similarly TVA library service, like the whole TVA program, has been planned on the basis of exhaustive surveys of the entire valley region.

The territorial survey is also a basic tool used in organizing WPA-assisted library service demonstrations. In fact, a comprehensive survey is indispensable to a State WPA Library Project Supervisor as an aid to selecting individual demonstration areas with due regard for such factors as the character and distribution of population, existing library services, transportation facilities, physical and political boundaries, library laws, sectional or regional attitudes, and the sources and amount of income potentially available for the support of library service. In some states the sponsor has assembled this information, together with a long-range state-wide plan for library development. In others the WPA finds it necessary to make its own surveys, gathering data county by county, as a guide to sound project planning. In its suggested procedure for organizing a state-wide library service project the Library Service Section provides a guide for making such territorial surveys.³⁸

8. The integration of existing library services.---In every sound demonstration program the new, area-wide service should be developed, as far as possible, by extending and integrating all such library facilities as a region may already possess. Thus, instead of superimposing a completely new library program upon

³⁷British Columbia Public Library Commission, British Columbia Library Survey (Victoria, B.C., 1929).

³⁸Commission of Enquiry into Canadian Libraries, Libraries in Canada, a Study of Library Conditions and Needs (Ryerson, 1933).

³⁸U.S. Work Projects Administration, Library Service Section, "Instruction and Work Procedure; WPA Bulletin No. 1" (pp. 8 and 9 of typewritten "Suggestions" for State Library Project Supervisors, n.d.).

the region, a demonstration program should utilize existing local libraries as a nucleus or framework upon which to build the permanent tax-supported service system.

In all of the above-mentioned programs, including the WPA, this policy has been followed. The Rosenwald demonstration was largely devoted to extending the service of existing public libraries. The TVA, which seriously considered the possibility of setting up its own organization to serve its employees directly³⁹ wisely decided to contract with an existing library to provide area-wide service, in accord with the Authority's established policy of working through local institutions wherever possible.

The WPA likewise builds its demonstration library service around town and village libraries wherever they exist. This does not mean that it encourages the continuance of independent, overlapping or economically unsound units of service. By pointing out the obvious advantages of pooling limited resources for better service to all parties concerned, it urges weak units to contract with neighboring city or county libraries to form strong, area-wide library systems capable of adequate permanent support. Even private club or association libraries are invited to become a part of the demonstration program by making their collections available to the public at large, and by supporting the movement for permanent tax-support.

9. Formal contractual agreements.--Formal contracts with local governments and library boards benefit a library demonstration program in three ways. They give each community served a sense of proprietorship, responsibility, or tangible participation in a co-operative enterprise (a "stake" in it, so to speak). They assure the demonstration of certain definite financial support in addition to that provided by the assisting agency. Finally, they accustom county and local authorities to associating contractual agreements with the provision of library service--an important factor in itself, since so many rural communities can obtain better permanent service by contracting with a neighboring city or county than by attempting to support independent libraries of their own.

All TVA library service is arranged by contract between

³⁹Rothrock and Harris, op. cit., p. 659.

the library furnishing the service, the TVA, and the Tennessee Department of Education.⁴⁰ Similarly, contracts were used in Rosenwald county library demonstrations.⁴¹ Most WPA library service projects now negotiate definite agreements with responsible representatives of each community served when demonstration service is begun. Its early experience revealed that without some such formal commitment to active participation individual communities tend to accept the demonstration as a federally-subsidized service, and thus fail to work for permanent library tax support. As part of its advisory aid to individual state-wide projects the Library Service Section in Washington assists project supervisors in drawing up contracts suited to their particular needs.

10. A definite time limit.---All of the foundation demonstrations referred to above have had definite time limits, ranging from three to five years. The Rosenwald experiment matched local "new money" dollar for dollar the first two years; one dollar for two the second two years; and one dollar for four the fifth and final year.⁴² The TVA library service is likewise a "withdrawing" program, in which the monthly sums contributed by the Authority decrease at specified intervals up to the end of the contract period (which is usually from one to two or three years).

In theory WPA library demonstrations are also expected to terminate after a reasonable period of full operation. In practice, however, many individual demonstrations have failed to set a time limit on their assistance to a particular region. The fact that WPA library projects are operated primarily to create needed employment makes it extremely difficult to withdraw demonstration aid in the face of local pressure for its continuance. Nevertheless, experience has shown that without some definite limit on outside assistance it eventually becomes increasingly difficult to interest the communities served in establishing complete and permanent library service at their own expense. Under these circumstances it is absolutely essential that WPA library

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 660.

⁴¹Wilson and Wight, op. cit., Appendix A, pp. 232-36.

⁴²Ibid., p. vi.

demonstrations focus their efforts on obtaining tax support while local enthusiasm for the new service is at its peak (usually within twelve or eighteen months). If such support is attained, the WPA may justifiably continue its help until the permanent library system is able to take over the service. However, if the issue is defeated the demonstration should be completely withdrawn and its facilities transferred to another region.

11. A sound unit for permanent service.--The selection of proper demonstration units is one of the most important problems confronting a State WPA Library Supervisor and the project sponsor. A single county may constitute a satisfactory unit, if it is large enough, populous enough, and wealthy enough to provide adequate support for a permanent library system. However, the areas still lacking tax-supported library service are largely rural; and most predominantly rural counties are not economically able to support independent area-wide libraries.

The trend in WPA library project administration is to select demonstration areas on the basis of bi- or tri-county or regional units, consisting of groups of counties which, by pooling their resources, can maintain a strong, centrally administered library system. This method necessarily involves long-range planning for an entire state or region if the grouping of counties is to be performed intelligently; but compared with the independent development of single county units it offers far greater ultimate returns.⁴³

The Fraser Valley and Prince Edward Island library demonstrations were both organized on a regional basis, as are the several TVA multi-county library programs. Since 1938 the WPA has also endeavored, where feasible, to demonstrate the advantages of regional units in its library assistance program. By the end of 1939 regional WPA demonstrations were under consideration or in operation in Colorado, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Nebraska, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.⁴³ During the quarter July-September, 1941, there were 22 regional WPA library service demonstrations giving service to 71 individual counties.⁴⁴ Per-

⁴³Edward A. Chapman, "WPA Library Demonstrations Serve Millions of Readers," ALA Bulletin, XXXIV (April, 1940), 231.

⁴⁴U.S. Work Projects Administration, Library Service Section, Quarterly report: "Summary of WPA Library Service Activities" (July-September, 1941). (Typewritten.)

haps the most outstanding example of such a multi-county undertaking was the Tidewater Regional Library demonstration, in which eight counties in northeastern Virginia joined together to develop an area-wide system of public and school library service with WPA assistance.⁴⁵

12. Impartial, area-wide service.--As a democratic social institution the American public library is expected to serve all citizens equally regardless of race, religion, or political beliefs. Thus, a library demonstration should endeavor to bring at least a minimum standard of service impartially to all of the inhabitants of its service area.

In the South, where state laws require the separate provision of certain facilities for negroes, the principal of equal service for all has by no means been observed, either with regard to libraries (a permissive function) or education (a mandatory service).⁴⁶ One of the primary objectives of the Rosenwald demonstrations was the stimulation of library service in the South on a county-wide basis to all residents, urban and rural, white and black, in school and out.

For a library service demonstration the concept of impartial, area-wide service involves not only area-wide coverage through the establishment of branches, deposit stations, and bookmobile service, but also the provision of materials suited to the different interests, reading abilities, and language limitations of its patrons. Just as the Prince Edward Island demonstration provided a collection of books in French for its readers, so some of the WPA library demonstrations in the South provide special collections of books "by and about Negroes" for lending stations in colored communities. Also it is the policy of WPA-assisted programs to achieve as complete area-wide library coverage as possible by means of branches and rotating deposits and by bookmobile service to isolated communities, wherever it is permanently desirable. Experience seems to indicate that, if only from the point of view of expediency, a library demonstration should provide area-wide, equal service in order to win the whole-

⁴⁵W. A. Moon, "The Tidewater Regional Public Library in Virginia," ALA Bulletin, XXXV (October 1, 1941), 471-79.

⁴⁶Eliza Atkins Gleason, The Southern Negro and the Public Library (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941).

hearted support of all communities in the region for a permanent public library system.

13. Citizens' library committees.—In keeping with the principle of "grass roots" administration, a sound library demonstration should work closely with a citizens' library committee. Such a group, far better than the assisting agency, can organize and carry through a successful campaign for permanent tax support. Moreover, the formation of county and local citizens library organizations helps to identify the library program as a community enterprise, which "belongs to" the people themselves. Thus, the WPA officially prescribes the formation of citizens' library committees in its operating procedure for library projects.⁴⁷ In fact, it is careful to refer to each individual demonstration (not only in its press and radio publicity, but in the lettering on bookmobiles) as "THE COUNTY LIBRARY, ASSISTED BY THE WPA," not as "THE COUNTY WPA LIBRARY" or "THE WPA COUNTY LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION." The importance with which the WPA regards the assistance of citizens' library committees is suggested by the fact that a whole chapter of its project supervisors' manual is devoted to explaining their organization, functions, and responsibilities.⁴⁸

14. Co-operation with local organizations.—Co-operation with local organizations and local chapters of state and national organizations is essential to winning full community support for a library service demonstration. Just as the Prince Edward Island demonstration co-operated closely with local committees, with the schools, and with such organizations as the Women's Institute, the Catholic Women's League, the Gyro Clubs, and the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, so WPA library demonstrations cultivate the support of local civic and social groups in the areas to be served.

In some communities the agricultural extension agent, the home demonstration worker, the superintendent of schools, and the

⁴⁷U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Operating Procedure for Library Service Projects" (Operating Procedure G-5), Section 20. (Mimeographed.)

⁴⁸U.S. Work Projects Administration, Library Service Section, "Preliminary Supervisors' Manual for the Operation of a State-wide Library Service Project" (September, 1940). (Mimeographed.)

county nurse give their backing to the demonstration, which, in turn, helps them in their work with the people. Similar services (through assistance with reading courses, forum discussions, and occasional club programs) to local societies, such as the P.T.A., the Farm Bureau Federation, the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, and the 4-H clubs, producers or growers associations, and service clubs, are also rendered by WPA library demonstrations. Such co-operation frequently brings the local library movement not only the official endorsement of these community groups, but also the good will and active support of many of their individual members as well.

15. Public relations.--Since the ultimate success of a library demonstration is directly dependent upon the willingness of the participating communities to support a new public service, a sound demonstration must give considerable attention to its "public relations." Good service has long been called the best "good-will builder" a library system can have. Nevertheless, even excellent service may not be fully used or appreciated by communities that have been "getting along all right without it" for generations--unless its benefits are specifically called to their attention. Thus, in an undertaking aimed at achieving a definite goal, such as a demonstration, some planned program of publicity or directed "education" is usually needed to supplement good service, if the object of the undertaking is to be attained.

In October, 1940, the Director of the Library Service Section announced that "WPA library service projects have adopted, as a major supporting activity to project service demonstrations, a program of publicity interpretative of public library service."⁴⁹ Thus, it is the practice of WPA library project supervisors to utilize local press and radio facilities extensively in demonstration areas to keep the residents informed concerning the aims and services of public libraries and community developments affecting their own library program. Project supervisors also appear before many local clubs and societies to explain the cost and benefits of permanent library service and the method of obtaining it. In addition, they may develop exhibits, posters, and simple leaf-

⁴⁹ Edward A. Chapman, "Work Projects Administration State-wide Library Service Projects" (a paper presented before the Southeastern Library Association Conference, Savannah, Georgia, October 25, 1940), p. 11. (Multigraphed.)

lets for use at county fairs, and other gatherings.

An outstanding example of planned demonstration publicity was worked out by the Minnesota state-wide WPA project, which made excellent local use of centrally-prepared press releases, library leaflets, citizens' committee news letters, and radio scripts. Two series of library posters, developed by WPA art projects in Illinois and New York for use on library demonstrations, are also worthy of special mention.

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One question of major importance has been deliberately omitted from the "code of best practice" suggested above. This concerns a library demonstration's proper relation to schools. It was omitted because the best practice for a particular demonstration depends entirely upon numerous local school and library conditions. Thus, each demonstration must decide for itself the nature and extent of its service to schools. The inclusion of service to schools as an integral part of a library demonstration program is usually desirable in areas where both school and public library services are largely undeveloped, and where the resources for their support are very limited. The important point is that each demonstration adopt a definite policy in the matter. If it gives school service, it should obtain commensurate support from school funds, and it should not permit this type of service so to monopolize its resources that its success as a public library demonstration is in any way jeopardized.

Summary

The over-all evaluation of the WPA library assistance program is presented in detail separately in chapter viii. At this point, therefore, a sentence will suffice to summarize the findings of chapter v. In administrative organization WPA library assistance today is as basically sound as its relation to the parent agency permits it to be; and with regard to library demonstration practice it appears to be not only sound but progressive in its willingness to experiment with new operational techniques. Admittedly, state-wide projects vary considerably in their adherence to the program's stated objectives. The foregoing observation, therefore, applies to the program as a whole, but is not an appraisal of any individual WPA-assisted demonstrations.

CHAPTER VI

WPA LIBRARY ASSISTANCE IN SOUTH CAROLINA: A STATE-WIDE PROGRAM OF PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

The first five chapters of this study have dealt with the evolution of federal assistance to libraries and the development, organization, and achievement of the entire WPA library assistance program. Chapters vi and vii present two case studies of individual state-wide WPA library projects to show by contrasting examples how this program has been adapted at the state level to two strikingly different sets of local conditions. Both projects are treated as of the spring of 1941. The first state treated, South Carolina, illustrates the opportunistic utilization of federal aid, by distributing its benefits as widely as possible in a short time in order to give every section of the state a share in the program from the outset. In the second case presented, that of Minnesota, the available federal assistance was concentrated in a limited number of demonstrations for a selected group of counties, according to a planned program of library development for the state.

In South Carolina, where (with three exceptions) county-wide library service was previously virtually non-existent, project operation was planned by the WPA itself, with a view toward providing every county in the state with at least some measure of area-wide service. In Minnesota, on the other hand, the project was planned and controlled by the state's authorized library agency, which preferred to limit area-wide demonstrations to selected unserved counties best suited to the establishment of permanent, tax-supported library systems. In the one instance, therefore, the program was developed to produce as extensive immediate benefits as possible; in the other the governing consideration was the achievement of gains that could be readily maintained by local and county library taxes.

South Carolina was chosen as representative of the South-

east region, although in many respects Louisiana, Georgia, or Mississippi might have served as well. Like the rest of the region, South Carolina is relatively high in its proportion of children and Negroes, in farm tenancy, in illiteracy and rural population, and in the proportion of its population without library service; and it is low in economic ability to support public services. Yet the situation in any of these characteristics is not so extreme as to distort its value as an example. It holds special interest for this study because of the wide spatial coverage of its WPA library program and because, lacking an active state agency, most of its library development in recent years has resulted directly from WPA project assistance.

The Setting for Library Development

Like the entire social and economic development of a region, library progress in a given state is conditioned, directly or indirectly, by the characteristics of its climate, topography, and natural resources, by its actual and potential wealth, and by the composition and distribution of its population. Thus, any realistic study of an individual state's library problem must begin with a consideration of its geographic setting, its social and economic structure, and its existing library facilities. Accordingly, these factors are summarized briefly to depict the background against which WPA library assistance developed in South Carolina.

Geography.¹--South Carolina, the smallest of the states in the Southeast region, occupies a triangular area of some 30,000 square miles. One side of the triangle lies along the Atlantic ocean. The other two sides meet in the northwest corner of the state in what is known as its "Alpine" section, a hilly region where the elevation ranges from 1,000 to 3,000 feet. The climate of the state is warm, and very humid near the sea. Cotton, tobacco, and corn are the principal crops, which are produced largely by tenant farmers. The weaving of cotton textiles is the state's most important single industry. Thus its manufacturing centers, largely located in the northwestern part of the state,

¹Based on data from the WPA Writers' Program publication, South Carolina, a Guide to the Palmetto State (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941).

are essentially factory towns, with separate "mill villages" for the workers in the spinning mills.

The 46 counties of the state range in size from 389 to 1,214 square miles. The commercial life of the state focuses in 11 regional trading centers, each of which serves from one to six counties. Several counties in the southern part of the state are in the trade areas of Augusta and Savannah, Georgia.

Geographically, economically, and even culturally South Carolina is divided into distinct sections. Parallelling the sea-board is the coastal plain, with its swamps and its agricultural inland. In the center of the state is the upper pine belt and the sand hill region, which includes the state capital, Columbia. From this section the land rises to the Piedmont Plateau and the hill country in the northwest, which constitutes the third basic region within the state.

Population.²--In 1940 South Carolina had a total population of 1,899,804, an increase of almost 10 per cent over 1930. The most striking characteristics of the population are its high proportion of Negroes and children, its low educational level, and its low degree of urbanization. More than 42 per cent of the inhabitants of South Carolina are Negroes. Approximately half of its population is under twenty years of age. The state has a reproduction rate of 125, as against 96 for the nation as a whole. In 1930, when the percentage of illiteracy (among persons ten years of age and over) for the United States was 4.3 per cent, South Carolina, with 14.9 per cent of its population (over ten) illiterate, ranked higher than any other state in this regard. In 1940 less than 15 per cent of its inhabitants over twenty-five years of age had completed 8 years of schooling, and almost 35 per cent had not completed even 5 years.

South Carolina is overwhelmingly a rural state, since less than 25 per cent of its inhabitants live in cities or towns of 2,500 or more persons. Only four of its 46 counties have cities of over 20,000, and only six others have towns with as many as 10,000 inhabitants. Twenty-two, or almost half of its counties, have no communities with as many as 5,000 inhabitants; and

²This section is based on U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, and Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 (Washington: Government Printing Office).

ll do not even contain villages of 2,500 persons. The total population of individual counties ranges from 10,000 to 136,000 inhabitants. However, as can be seen from Figure 13, only 10, or less than one-fourth, have as many as 50,000 persons living within their borders.

Economic ability.---In any index of economic or financial ability South Carolina ranks near the bottom in comparison with the other 47 states. For example, in 1940, when the average per capita income of the nation was \$573, it was \$281 in South Carolina, which was 45th in order of rank among all the states.³ In assessed valuation of units upon which library service depends for support South Carolina is also relatively poor. Thus less than 20 per cent of its counties have as much as \$10,000,000 in assessed valuation (the amount needed to raise \$10,000 by a 1-mill library tax levy) whereas 70 per cent of the counties in North Carolina and more than half of those in Louisiana have valuations of \$10,000,000 or more. Moreover, it is the only state in the Southeast in which no single county has a valuation as high as \$500 per capita.⁴

The county as a unit for library service.---Under modern conditions of transportation a single area-wide library system can provide adequate service throughout a territory of 5,000 square miles from a centrally located headquarters collection. Yet in South Carolina no county has an area in excess of 1,300 square miles, and 41 of its 46 counties contain less than 1,000 square miles.

The minimum population standard recommended as a basis for an efficient unit for area-wide county or regional library service is from 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants.⁵ Preferably such a unit will be located in the natural trade area of a central library containing at least 20,000 volumes. Figure 13 shows that almost one-third of the counties in South Carolina do not have populations of even 25,000. In fact, less than one-fourth of

³U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, August, 1941, "Income Payments by States," p. 14.

⁴Tommie Dora Barker, Libraries of the South (Chicago: American Library Association, 1936), p. 38.

⁵Louis R. Wilson and Edward A. Wight, County Library Service in the South (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), p. 196.

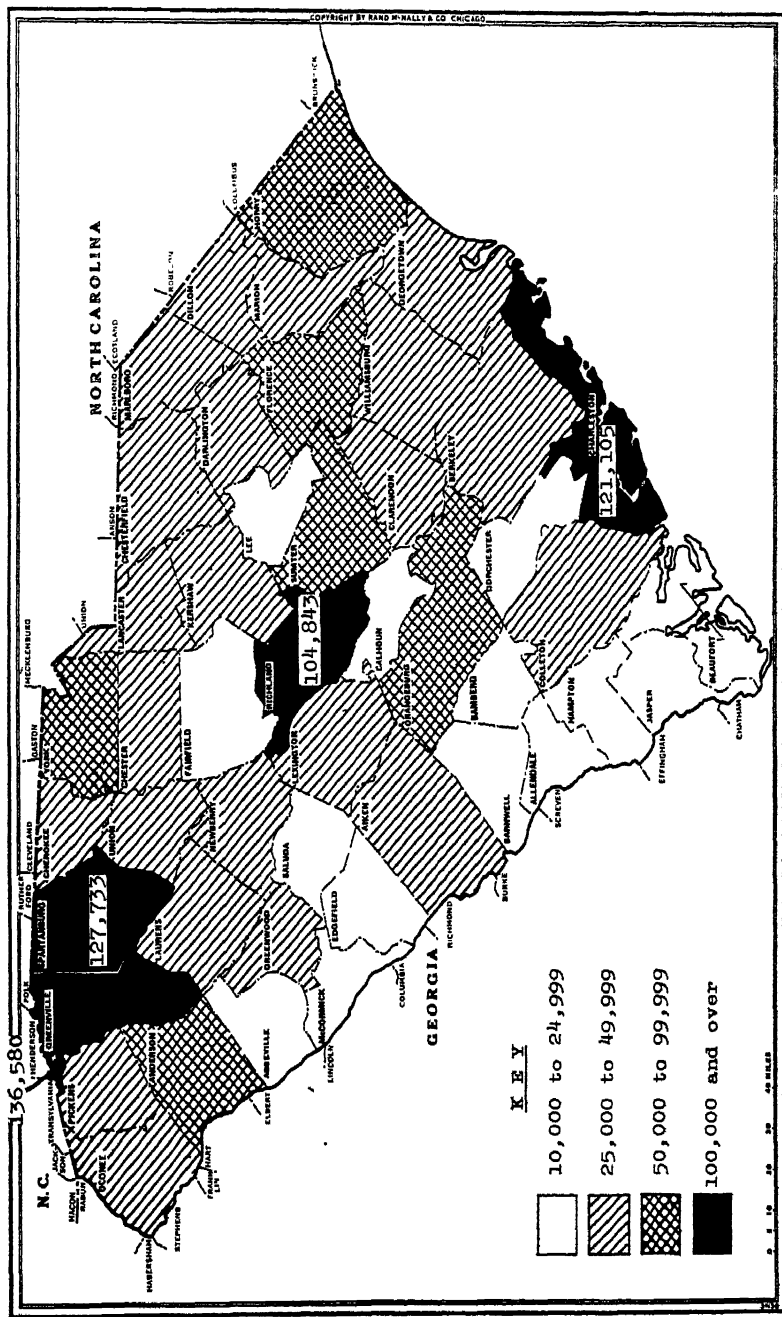


Fig. 13.--Population of South Carolina, by Counties, 1940*

*Sources: Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940.

them have cities of 10,000 or more, which could serve as headquarters for a county library system.

The minimum amount of support required to maintain adequately a county or regional library system has been variously set at \$15,000 to \$20,000 and \$25,000.⁶ As can be seen from Figure 14 only five counties in South Carolina could raise as much as \$15,000 for library support by levying the usual 1-mill tax. Single counties, therefore, are too small and too poor to constitute efficient units for library organization in South Carolina.

The implications of the South Carolina setting for the development of state-wide library service are clear. Geographically, if the support were equitably distributed and the service efficiently organized, this state should be able to provide all counties with a library program of at least minimum adequacy. The climate is favorable for year-round bookmobile service, and the natural and human resources of the state are sufficient for such a program. However, the joint evils of depleted land, farm tenancy, and a single cash crop economy, together with absentee ownership of many manufacturing enterprises, seriously limits the state's ability to support strong, independent county libraries along traditional lines of organization.

The need for supporting entirely separate facilities for Negroes, coupled with the fact that few counties could support even one area-wide library, makes it evident that state and federal aid and a multi-county or regional pattern of library organization offers the only efficient means of developing permanent service throughout South Carolina. The WPA library program has provided the state at least temporarily with the stimulus of federal aid. This chapter considers how this aid has been used and with what results.

Library development in South Carolina before the WPA.--

When the WPA state-wide library project was inaugurated in South Carolina (in 1935) the state was still largely without free tax-supported area-wide public library service. It had laws permitting counties, townships, and municipal corporations to establish public libraries by a majority vote and to levy a tax up to two mills for their support. In 1934 these laws were extended to per-

⁶Louis R. Wilson, The Geography of Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), p. 83.

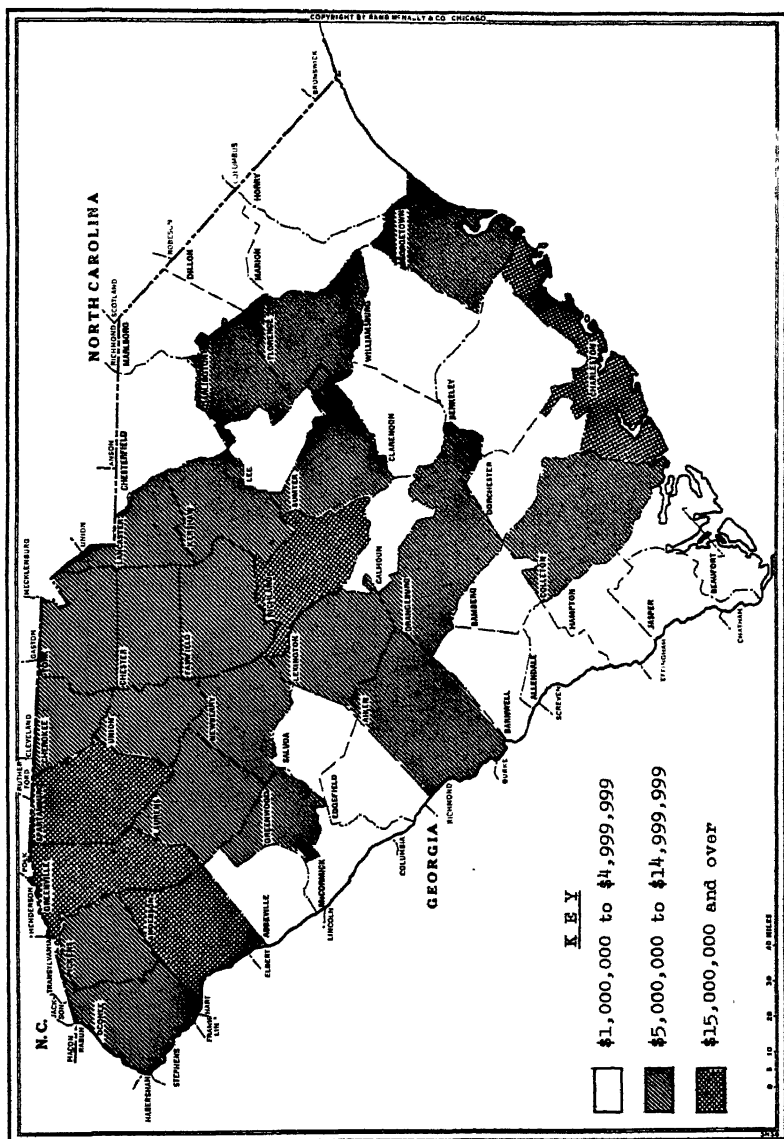


Fig. 14.--Assessed valuation in counties in South Carolina in 1939*

*Source: 1939 Report of the Comptroller General of the State of South Carolina

mit the establishment of regional library systems. However, library development, left entirely to local initiative, had been limited to the larger urban centers for the most part; and service to Negroes was virtually non-existent before WPA assistance was made available. At that time South Carolina's rank among the other states in library development was 46th (on the basis of per cent of population registered, per capita annual circulation, per capita annual total expenditure, per capita annual expenditure for books, number of volumes held per capita, and number of volumes added per capita in one year).⁷ Of all the Southeastern states Mississippi alone ranked lower.

Unlike some of the other Southeastern states, South Carolina has no tax-supported state library agency or commission, no accredited institution for training public, school, and college librarians and library extension workers, and no state supervisor of school libraries. There is a state library association of practising librarians, a citizens' library association, and, nominally, a State Library Board. This board was established in 1929 to serve as the state's official extension agency; but to date the legislature has not seen fit to give it a regular appropriation with which to function. Thus, while each of the above groups are spasmodically active in behalf of library development, they apparently lack the leadership needed to co-ordinate their efforts effectively. As a result, when the WPA project came into being, it tended to assume some of the functions of a state agency, since it alone was in a position to devote funds and personnel to the actual development of library service throughout the state.

The most noteworthy effort in behalf of state-wide library development before 1935 was a Citizens' Conference on the Library Needs of South Carolina, held on January 4-5, 1934, at Clemson Agricultural College. This meeting, which was attended by "representatives of such groups as the Grange, the Parent-Teachers Association, the State Education Association, the American Association of University Women, the Federation of Women's Clubs, the State Council of Farm Women, the Agricultural Extension Service, the South Carolina Council, Business and Professional Women's Clubs,"⁸ discussed the present status of South Carolina's libra-

⁷Ibid., p. 186.

⁸Barker, op. cit., p. 10.

ries, adopted a program for library development,⁹ and appointed a follow-up committee.

Another important event in South Carolina's pre-WPA library history was the selection of two of its counties, Charleston and Richland, as locations for Rosenwald county library demonstrations. The former received \$80,000, the latter \$75,000 for five-year demonstrations of county-wide white and Negro service in 1930. However, since both counties are so atypical of the state as a whole (in population, wealth, and urbanization) it is questionable how much these demonstrations could be expected to affect the development of area-wide library service in the state as a whole.

A third episode of importance to library development in this state was the employment of Dr. Helen Gordon Stewart as a field agent to organize a legislative campaign for state aid and support for an active state library agency. Miss Stewart was engaged in 1939 with a special fund obtained by the State Library Board. For several months she traveled throughout the state, organizing citizen interest in behalf of library development with state aid. Unfortunately, however, the legislature failed to pass the library assistance bill, and her work came to an end. In 1942 the State Library Board was still without any financial support.

Since no state agency has published annual statistics on South Carolina libraries, it is well-nigh impossible to trace their development from year to year. Fortunately for this study, however, data on "the public library and public school library situation as it existed in South Carolina January 1, 1932" was compiled and published at Clemson College for the Citizens' Conference referred to above; and this publication¹⁰ clearly reveals the conditions with which the WPA library project had to deal.

According to this survey, in 1932 there were 56 so-called "public libraries" in South Carolina. Of these only 30 were supported wholly or in part by public funds (15 wholly and 15 in part). The remaining 26 were dependent for their continued opera-

⁹The text of this "program" appears in ibid., pp. 174-75.

¹⁰Mary E. Frayser, The Libraries of South Carolina (South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station of Clemson Agricultural College, Bulletin 292), October, 1933.

tion upon subscriptions, rentals, and donations. Some were apparently without any regular support. Some were semi-private. Some did not permit their books to circulate. Only 6 of the entire 56 libraries had as much as \$5,000 annual income. The total library support for the state was \$168,832, or 10 cents per capita (compared to 37 cents per capita for the United States as a whole).

The total collections of these libraries amounted to 304,756 volumes, or .12 volumes per capita for the state (compared with .82 per capita for the nation). Their total circulation was 1,097,439 volumes per year, or .63 volumes per capita (compared with 3.67 per capita for the United States). Of the thirty libraries receiving "some public support" only five had collections of 10,000 volumes or more. Less than one-fourth of the entire 56 libraries were known to be cataloged. Less than one-half were reported as being "open daily except Sunday," even for a few hours. All told, according to this study, not a single library in the state was up to the American Library Association standard in either book provision or income.¹¹

In terms of area-wide coverage South Carolina's lack of library service is perhaps even more striking. As shown in Figure 15, there were in 1932 only three counties giving systematic county-wide service (including the two counties then operated as Rosenwald demonstrations). This map also locates the 18 local libraries with incomes of at least \$1,000 and the 12 others receiving at least "some" support from public funds. The 30 "publicly-supported" libraries are situated in only 25 of the state's 46 counties. Thus, by simple subtraction it becomes evident that before federal assistance was made available for library development 21 counties (with an aggregate population of 535,450) were without a single tax-supported library within their borders.

The differences in availability of library service to white and Negro populations and to urban and rural inhabitants also characterize the fundamental inequalities in the state's pattern of library distribution. In 1932 more than 60 per cent of the state's entire population was without any public library service. In rural areas (which then included almost 80 per cent of the population) more than 75 per cent of the people were with-

¹¹Ibid., p. 13.

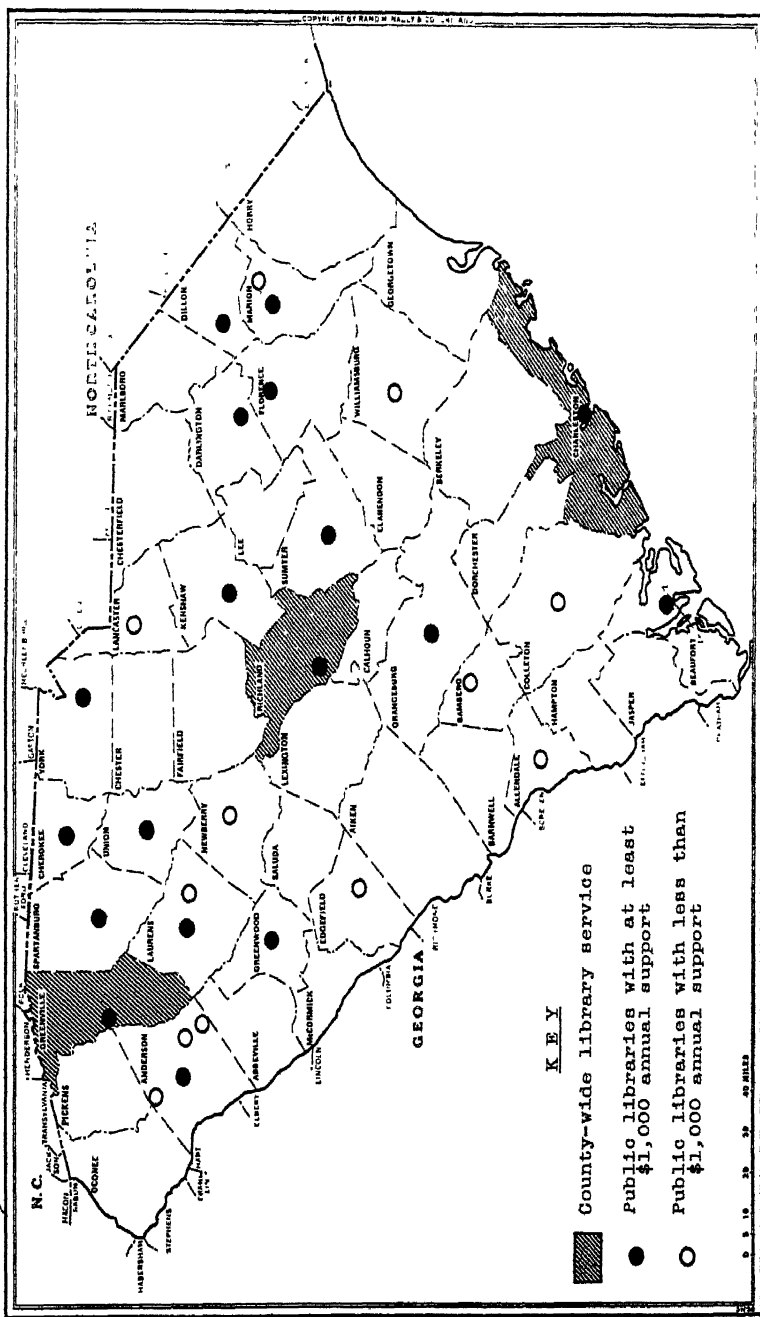


Fig. 15.--Library service in South Carolina in 1932*

*Source: Mary E. Frayser, The Libraries of South Carolina (Bulletin No. 292, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson Agricultural College), October, 1933.

out service. Almost 94 per cent of the urban population, on the other hand, had at least some type of library service at that time. Since only 3 counties were giving any regular service to Negroes, the total per cent of population without service was actually far in excess of 60 per cent. The proportions cited above erroneously credit the entire population (white and Negro) of each town or village with a library as being served.

In school library service the differences between white and Negro facilities were equally striking in 1932. At that time, for example, 2,123, or over 90 per cent, of the Negro elementary schools were without any library books whatever, while less than 40 per cent of the white schools had no book collections. At the high school level almost 80 per cent of the Negro schools lacked libraries, as opposed to less than 14 per cent of the white schools. The total school library expenditures for the year 1931-32 (including both elementary and high schools) were \$15,581 for white schools and \$728 for those serving Negroes.¹²

Summary.—The situation which confronted the WPA library project in South Carolina can be summarized briefly as follows. Except in three counties and a few of the larger urban centers, free public library service was practically non-existent. The size, population, and economic ability of individual counties, together with the increased cost of maintaining separate facilities for white and Negro inhabitants, clearly indicated a need for developing new library services on a regional instead of an independent county basis of organization and support. Few local libraries had become sufficiently well entrenched to hamper seriously the development of larger-unit library systems. Citizen groups, as evidenced by the Clemson College conference, were apparently interested in working to extend the benefits of library service to the many unserved sections of the state. The great need, then, when the WPA project was organized in 1935, was for assistance and leadership in planning and stimulating the establishment of library service realistically adapted to the potentialities and needs of the varying natural regions of South Carolina.

¹² Ibid., pp. 26-31.

The State-wide WPA Library Project

The WPA library project in South Carolina was established in 1935, when all former, locally-sponsored FERA projects were reorganized on a state-wide basis for WPA operation. This section briefly describes the project's objectives and organization, traces the scope of its activity through June, 1941, and discusses such aspects of its administration and service as may be worthy of special mention.

Objectives and organization.—From the beginning the basic objective of the South Carolina state-wide WPA library project has been to extend library service to all parts of the state formerly without it in the hope that such service would be perpetuated locally with support from public funds after a reasonable period of demonstration. This objective was expected to be achieved by engaging directly in the following types of activity:

1. Providing workers to assist established libraries in expanding their services.
2. Establishing local libraries or reading rooms in communities previously without a local library.
3. Extending library service to entire counties by bookmobile and deposit service from county depository headquarters.

As the State Supervisor has described the function of the project in a recent annual report: "It is serving somewhat in the capacity of a state library agency, in that it has been able to initiate library service, co-ordinate services, set up standards, stimulate development of services by assisting in the purchase of bookmobiles and by loaning project-owned books, supplementing the services of existing libraries, offering a cataloging and book selection service, and supplying the supervision of a professionally trained staff."¹³

In keeping with the policy of spreading the benefits of the program to all areas without library service, the project undertook at the outset to make its facilities equally available to all counties alike. Thus it early developed an administrative

¹³Federal Works Agency, Work Projects Administration, State of South Carolina, "Statewide Library Project Annual Report, July 1, 1939-June 30, 1940," Introduction. (Mimeographed.)

organization large enough to provide adequate direct supervision over operating units in all parts of the state. The personnel of the state-wide project, therefore, consists of a State Supervisor and her staff, four district supervisors, each with at least three assistants and several area supervisors, and numerous unit supervisors or project foremen in immediate charge of groups of individual certified workers. (See Fig. 17, p. 156, for a map of the project's administrative district and area subdivisions.) Following the plan of dual supervision described in chapter v (pp. 98-140), the district supervisors are "administratively responsible" to their respective district managers and "technically responsible" to the State Library Project Supervisor. In practice the latter officer actually directs most aspects of project planning and operation.

The specific details of this state-wide project organization appear in Figure 16. Under this arrangement the State Supervisor, administratively and technically responsible for the entire project, is guided and assisted in planning project development by the Library Project Advisory Board and the State Board of Education which (owing to the lack of an active state library agency) is the project's official sponsor. Immediately responsible to the State Supervisor are her assistant supervisor and the librarian in charge of the project's central book selection and processing unit.

In each of the state's four administrative districts the district supervisor is responsible for project operation throughout the district; and her three assistant supervisors, respectively, are in charge of the training of workers in public relations and general library methods, library extension techniques, and book repair. The various area supervisors, also responsible to the district supervisors, are each in charge of actual project operation in a given area, usually comprising from one to five counties (as shown in Fig. 17). Under their direction the foremen or supervisors of individual units oversee the daily activities of the certified library aides.

Advisory assistance and co-operation at the county level is available to the area supervisors through each county's citizen's library committee and a county co-sponsor (usually the county board of education or a county library board). Finally, where workers are placed in established libraries the local li-

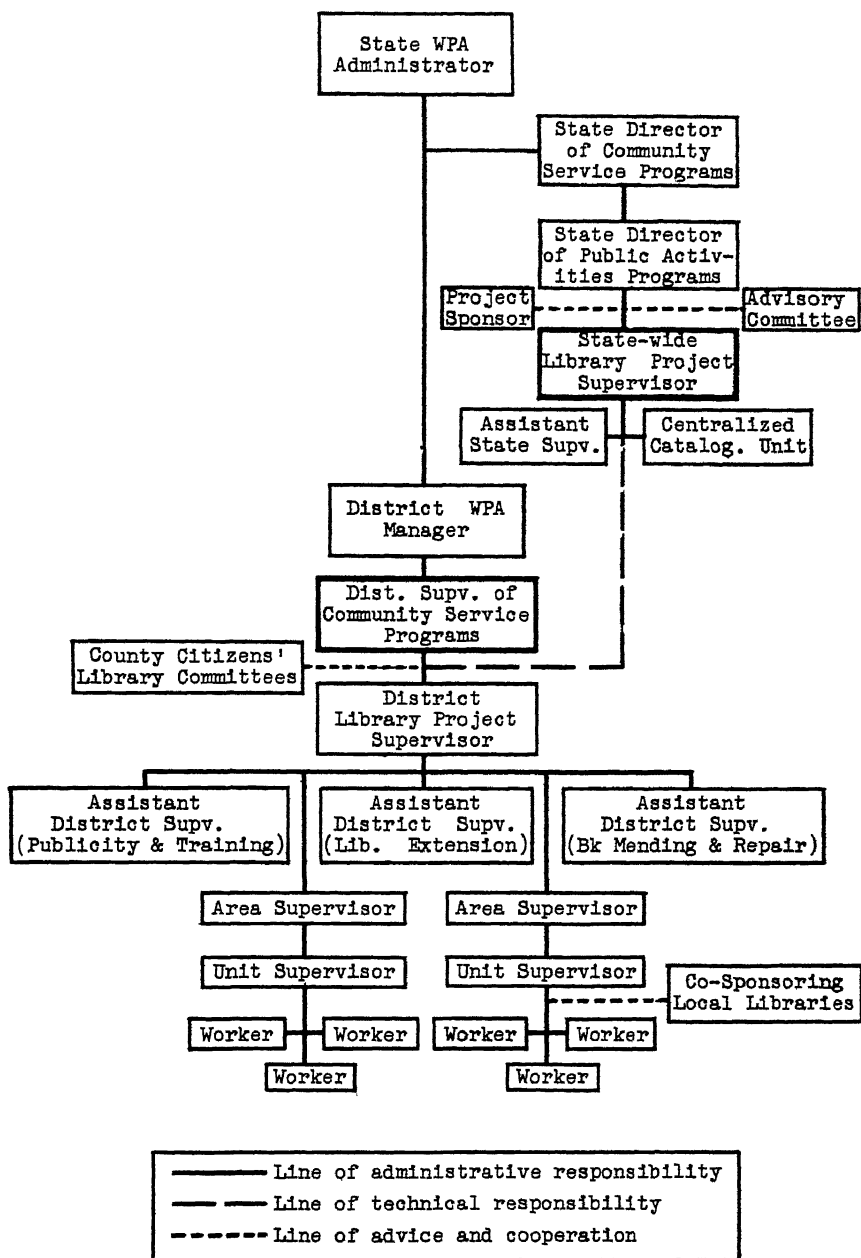


Fig. 16.--Organization of the South Carolina State-wide WPA Library Project in 1941.

brarian usually exercises some supervision over their day-to-day activity.

The supervisory staff required by this organizational plan would include at least 40 persons (down through the area supervisors) if all positions were filled as indicated. Actually, since permissible quotas of non-relief personnel are related directly to the number of certified workers employed, this staff usually numbers only 25 or 30 persons. In March, 1941, it had 28 members, including 9 trained librarians and 19 with some experience and in-service training. Thus, many district and assistant district supervisors serve also part of the time as area supervisors for selected groups of counties.

Development, scope, and achievement by June, 1941.--Unlike some state-wide library projects, it cannot be said of the South Carolina program that it began in a limited sphere and expanded slowly until its benefits ultimately reached into all sections of the state. As early as March, 1936, the State Supervisor reported that \$182,000 of federal funds were available for library relief employment, and that traveling book exchanges or extension work in schools and local libraries were already being carried on in all counties, with a staff of 734 women.¹⁴ By the middle of 1937, 23 bookmobiles, obtained with WPA assistance, had been put into operation to provide county-wide library service in as many formerly unserved counties. All told, the project obtained 33 different bookmobiles and at its peak employed more than 1,000 persons throughout the state. Thus, from the beginning it has been a policy of South Carolina's WPA organization to spread the benefits of federal library aid as far as possible while the opportunity lasted.

Since July, 1941, owing to the increase in private employment, the library assistance program, like the rest of the WPA, has greatly reduced the scope of its operations. Throughout the nation many weak units and entire demonstrations in counties least likely to establish permanent tax-supported library service have been discontinued. The statistical data on the South Carolina project, therefore, are presented for the month of March,

¹⁴Ida Belle Entekin, "WPA Library Projects in South Carolina" (Mimeographed statement prepared by the State Supervisor for release to the press, radio, and the American Library Association March 7, 1938)

1941, a period during which project activity was by no means at its peak, but while units were still operating in every county in the state. These basic statistics on project operation appear in Table 16.

TABLE 16
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE-WIDE WPA LIBRARY PROJECT:
BASIC STATISTICS^a

Item	White	Negro	Total
Number of units ^b operated.....	392	25	417
Personnel:			
Certified workers.....	624	28	652
Supervisors.....	36	0	36
Total.....	660	28	668
Number of counties assisted...	46	12	46
WPA-operated county bookmo- biles.....	29	0	29
Bookstock:			
Purchased by WPA.....	19,826	477	20,303
Owned by counties.....	396,618	35,027	431,645
Total.....	416,444	35,504	451,948
Adult.....	230,265	24,727	254,992
Juvenile.....	186,179	10,777	196,956
Registration:			
Adult.....	72,314	3,339	75,653
Juvenile.....	79,639	6,763	86,402
Total.....	151,953	10,102	162,055
Circulation:			
Adult.....	105,357	6,666	112,023
Juvenile.....	199,791	8,838	208,629
Total.....	305,148	15,504	320,652
Total circulation 7/1/38- 6/30/39.....	3,729,967	157,110	3,887,077
Estimated population served.	573,403	46,920	620,323

^aBased on official project reports. Unless otherwise noted, the data refer to project operation as of March, 1941.

^bA "unit" refers to a library, school, bookmending workshop, reading room, deposit station, or bookmobile in which a library project worker or group of workers is employed.

According to this factual summary, the WPA had at that time 668 employees (including supervisory personnel) engaged in library service activities in 46 counties. Among the certified

(relief) workers represented in this figure 246 were staffing various school library services, 174 were employed in 25 regional book repair units, 104 were public library aides or attendants, and 50 were operating area-wide bookmobile service in 29 different counties. Twenty-eight were Negroes, engaged in providing various library services to members of their own race in 12 counties.

The data on book stock, circulation, and expenditures involved in the operation of library services operated by WPA workers give a clear indication of the extent of this program. (Statistics on the cost of the project are presented in Table 17.)

TABLE 17

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE-WIDE WPA LIBRARY PROJECT
OPERATING EXPENDITURES, AS OF JUNE 30, 1941^a

Date	WPA Expenditures	Sponsors' Contribution	Total
July, 1940-June, 1941	\$ 478,118	\$285,586 ^b	\$ 763,704
July, 1935-June, 1941	2,632,966	936,576 ^b	3,569,542

^aSource: WPA Division of Statistics, Washington, D.C.

^bIncludes amounts credited for space, heat, light, equipment, and the use of books belonging to various co-sponsors.

Moreover, the relative importance of WPA assistance to libraries in South Carolina becomes evident when these figures are studied in relation to those on library service in the state in 1932. For example, in 1932 South Carolina's public libraries had a book stock of 304,756 volumes and an annual circulation of less than 1,100,000, whereas in 1941 WPA-operated library systems had a stock of 450,000 volumes (including 20,000 bought with federal funds) and a book circulation of approximately 3,500,000. Similarly, in contrast with the \$168,831 spent for library service throughout the state in 1932, the WPA alone spent \$478,118 as its share in the cost of library project operation during the fiscal year 1940-41.

Unfortunately the statistics on library conditions in 1932 and in 1941 are not actually comparable. The former data

include only public libraries, while the latter refer to a program which includes both public and school library service in many counties. Nevertheless, if these limitations are borne in mind, these comparisons clearly suggest the importance with which WPA library assistance is regarded in this state. All told, from 1935 to 1941 the federal government spent over \$2,500,000 on South Carolina's library work relief program, or more than twice what the state itself would normally spend for public libraries in the same period of time (at the rate of expenditure cited in 1932).

In terms of library coverage equally striking contrasts appear when area-wide service before WPA is compared with that available in 1941. Whereas in 1932 there were only 3 counties with rural library service (see Fig. 15), in 1941, 36 of the state's 46 counties were receiving county-wide service by bookmobile, either from established libraries or from WPA-operated library service demonstrations (see Fig. 18).

In 8 of the 10 counties still without area-wide service in 1941, county-wide demonstrations had been attempted and abandoned. Most of these counties were simply too small or too poor to be able to support an independent, permanent library system. In all 10 of them, however, the WPA is still making some service available to individual towns and schools. In March, 1941, it had 84 workers in these underprivileged counties, operating or assisting in maintaining 9 county depository centers, 6 community libraries or reading rooms, and 44 school library collections.

Summary.---The scope of library project assistance in South Carolina can be summarized by pointing out that as a result of its state-wide policy of organization and operation the WPA has made some form of library service--however thinly distributed and however temporary it may be--available to every county in the state. It has also stimulated the expenditure of approximately \$50,000 annually by counties participating in the program, as cash contributions of "new money" for library service. Finally, it has brought thousands of dollars worth of additional effort to bear upon library development (in terms of space, heat, light, equipment, supplies, book collections, and citizen effort). Unfortunately the amount of money contributed by individual counties is rarely enough to support a library system alone. The real permanence of the program's benefits, therefore, can not be measured until WPA aid is completely withdrawn and county-wide

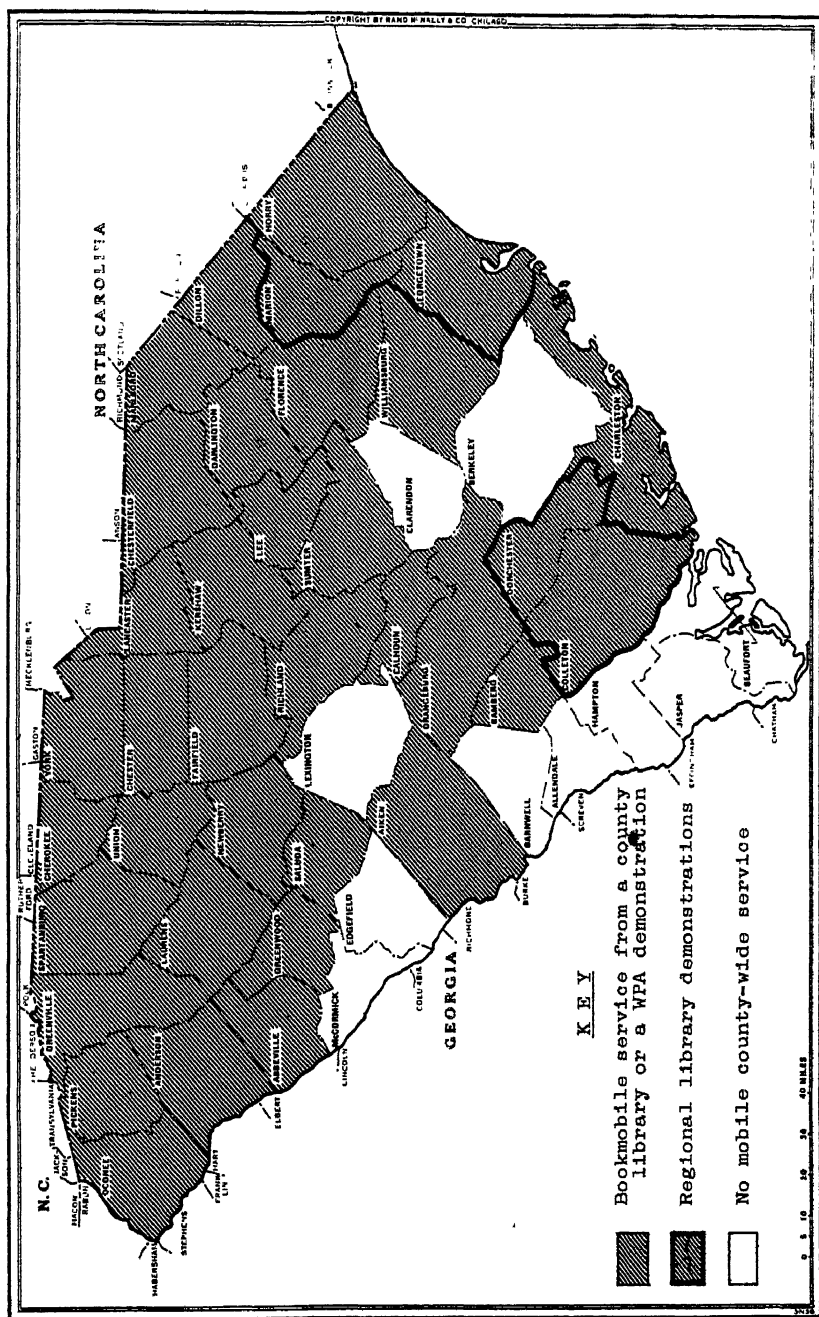


Fig. 18.--County-wide library service in South Carolina in March, 1941

services are either supported from county funds or discontinued.

Two Patterns of WPA Library Assistance

The South Carolina state-wide WPA library project has followed two major patterns in furthering the development of library service in individual counties. One pattern has been used in counties with some existing library facilities. The other has been developed for counties with no library service before the WPA. A few specific examples will illustrate the kinds of service that are made available in each instance.

Counties with existing local libraries.—Wherever a county had a central town or city with a library of its own, WPA procedure was to organize a county-wide system of library service on a demonstration basis, using this library as a nucleus or headquarters for the county. By providing workers, limited funds, selected new books, and assistance in securing a bookmobile, it secured contributions of funds from county and school authorities, and obtained the full co-operation of the original public library, which, as center of a county system, stood to gain much at little additional expense to itself. Lancaster, Greenwood, and Sumter counties are examples in which this pattern was carried out with success.

In Lancaster, a county of 27,000 population in 1930, the county seat, a town of 3,500 inhabitants, had a small "public library" of 1,700 volumes before the WPA. This library had an annual income of \$300, obtained in part from public funds. It was kept open twice a week by a volunteer "librarian." Its book circulation was not even recorded.¹⁵

In 1936 a demonstration of county-wide library service was inaugurated, using this library as a nucleus. The county made a cash contribution to the support of the undertaking. The WPA provided workers, loaned some new books, and rented a chassis for a bookmobile. Shortly after the service was begun the county erected a new library building with WPA assistance. In 1937 a 1-mill tax (providing approximately \$7,000 annually) was obtained for the new county library, and a trained librarian was engaged to administer the service. Thanks to WPA assistance in staffing

¹⁵All data on libraries in South Carolina before the WPA are taken from Frayser, op. cit.

the program during its first years, this library was able to apply a relatively high proportion of its new funds to the systematic strengthening of its book collection. Thus, by 1941 it had increased its own book stock to over 20,000 volumes, or more than ten times the size of collection with which the demonstration was begun. In 1939 this county-wide library system had a circulation of 274,420.¹⁶ Today it regularly devotes a portion of its funds to a branch library for Negroes, housed in a local Negro training school. This branch has a regular Negro attendant and a WPA Negro library aide. Its collection, consisting largely of books given to the community by Harvey D. Kelsey, a Negro philanthropist of Washington, D.C., includes more than 8,000 volumes.

The pattern of development in Greenwood county took much the same form as it did in Lancaster. In Greenwood, a city of 11,000, a Carnegie library, with a bookstock of 7,500 volumes, became the nucleus of a county library. In 1937 a 1-mill tax was obtained for its support, and separate cataloging and county departments were created to handle the increase in staff work. As a municipal library in 1932 it had had a circulation of 40,000. As a county library in 1939 its circulation was 106,922. By 1941 it had a staff of 3 trained librarians and 4 WPA aides, and an income close to \$10,000.

Although Sumter county did not begin its county-wide demonstration until 1938, it also followed the pattern described above with success. A city of approximately 12,000 in 1930, it had a Carnegie library with an income of \$1,750 and a bookstock of 5,500 volumes. During 1939 it obtained a 1/2-mill county tax, which early in 1941 was increased to a full mill (to produce an income of between \$8,000 and \$10,000). In 1932 the Sumter public library had a circulation of 33,000. In 1939, as a full-fledged county library it circulated 166,998 volumes. By 1941 it was serving a Negro community, a Negro school, and (by bookmobile and deposit service) more than 35 different schools and lending centers throughout the county. Including nearly 500 selected titles on loan from the WPA the book stock of this library system had increased to almost 25,000 volumes.

¹⁶"Recent Library Development in South Carolina" (a mimeographed pamphlet, compiled in 1939 and issued in 1940, without imprint, by the WPA state-wide library project).

Aiken, Darlington, Orangeburg, Cherokee, Chester, and Newberry are other counties where the above pattern has been followed with more or less success. Some of these counties now have a regular 1-mill library tax and a librarian paid by the county. Others have been continued on a demonstration basis with annual appropriations from their county delegations.

Counties with no public libraries.---WPA assistance to counties formerly without any library facilities has followed quite a different pattern. In some of these counties the WPA did attempt for a time to develop demonstrations of area-wide service, but abandoned the effort when it became evident that the resources of such counties were simply inadequate to support permanent, independent library systems. By 1941, therefore, its pattern of aid to these counties consisted merely in helping to staff and service local reading rooms in communities willing and able to make token contributions to their support.

Barnwell, Hampton, Jasper, and McCormick are examples of this group of counties. All four of these counties lie along the Georgia border, in the poorest section of the state. They are all small in area, completely rural, extremely poor, high in illiteracy, and have populations consisting largely of tenant Negroes. Thus they are entirely lacking in conditions favorable for county library development.

Barnwell, with a population of 14,000 Negroes and only 7,000 white persons (in 1930) had no library whatever before the WPA period. In 1937 the state-wide project started a reading room in the county seat, a village of 1,800 persons. From this center a few deposits were sent out to other communities; and in 1939 another reading room was established in Williston, a town of 1,000. In 1939 these two reading rooms had a combined book stock of 585 volumes. They had 417 borrowers and a circulation of 3,660 for the year. By 1941 the WPA was operating 7 units (including 5 schools) in this county. In March of that year it reported a total book stock of 4,570 for the county, including 372 volumes on loan from the WPA. Admittedly this can still hardly be called a library; but it may perhaps serve to strengthen the resources of a regional library system if this county ever becomes part of such a multi-county unit. With an assessed valuation of less than \$3,500,000, it can never develop a sound county-wide library program without substantial outside aid.

Hampton county, with a population of 10,000 Negroes and 7,000 white persons in 1930 had no libraries whatever until 1936, when the WPA opened a community reading room at the county seat, a village of 900 inhabitants. By the end of 1939 this "library" had 1,900 volumes, 778 registered borrowers, and an annual circulation of 4,279. In 1941 the WPA was providing token service in 4 schools and 2 reading rooms in various parts of the county.

Jasper, a county with barely 10,000 inhabitants (of whom two-thirds were Negroes) in 1930, has only a small WPA reading room operated in co-operation with the Home Demonstration Clubs and two school WPA deposit libraries. In 1939 this reading room had 45 books, 98 borrowers, and a circulation of 966. By March, 1941, the total bookstock in the county was 1,600 volumes, including 250 loaned by the WPA. With an assessed valuation of less than \$3,000,000, Jasper can scarcely hope to establish permanent county-wide service except by pooling its resources with several adjoining counties on a regional basis.

McCormick, the fourth example in this group, is equally unable to support an adequate library system of its own. It is a county of barely 400 square miles, and had in 1940 a population of 10,367 (representing a loss of 1,104 since 1930). Here also the Negroes outnumber white persons 2 to 1. In 1939 its assessed valuation was less than \$1,500,000. Library service in 1941 consisted of 3 community reading rooms operated by the WPA in McCormick, a village of 1,456 inhabitants, Parksville (168 residents) and Plum Branch (142 residents). The WPA also staffs 3 school library units and maintains a mending unit at the county seat to serve several adjoining counties.

In some instances other poor counties, such as Bamberg, Calhoun, and Saluda, have endeavored to maintain county-wide service, begun by the WPA, on a "shoe-string" appropriation. Without real ability to support such a system, however, such efforts can at best produce but feeble results. Unfortunately the likelihood of obtaining state aid for assisting counties in the poor section of the state is rather remote. Since their inhabitants are largely tenant Negroes, they contribute little to state revenues, and many of them naturally tend to patronize the more convenient trade centers in Georgia in preference to smaller or more distant cities in their own state.

The only way in which counties unable to support inde-

pendent county-wide library systems can hope to obtain the benefits of such service is by joining with several adjacent counties to form a regional unit that is capable of maintaining a sound and substantial, completely integrated library program.

As a final comment on WPA patterns of assistance in South Carolina it should be noted that the two patterns described above evolved gradually and were not consciously formulated and adopted as project policy. In the beginning a single pattern was applied to all counties. The second pattern emerged when it became evident that the first could not be universally applied with success.

Regional Library Demonstrations

It has been pointed out that with very few exceptions the counties of South Carolina do not have sufficient taxable resources to support strong, independent, area-wide libraries. It has also been noted that with library service so largely undeveloped throughout the state in 1935 the WPA project had an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the advantages of developing regional units for library organization and support. When the project started, however, there was no active state agency for libraries in South Carolina, and hence no plan or tentative blue-print upon which such a program might be based. Lacking any such pattern to guide them, the WPA authorities, acting under pressure to extend project benefits to all counties alike as quickly as possible, allowed independent county library demonstrations to develop almost at random. Thus, with little understanding of the requirements of an area-wide library system, many counties wholly unable to support a permanent library service program formed "county libraries" almost overnight by making the necessary initial cash contribution to obtain a WPA demonstration and a shiny new book-mobile.

With such a beginning it is not surprising that little has been accomplished in the development of regional library units. Several different combinations of counties have been considered as potential locations for regional experiments (e.g., Allendale-Barnwell-Hampton, Greenwood-Laurens-Newberry-Union, and Berkeley-Williamsburg). However, by March, 1941, only two "regional demonstrations" had actually been organized. These two experiments, treated below, are the Colleton-Dorchester Bi-County

Library and the Tri-County Regional Library serving Georgetown, Marion, and Horry counties.

The Colleton-Dorchester Bi-County Library.—The first attempt to develop a regional unit for library service in South Carolina began in March, 1937, when a bi-county demonstration was started in Colleton and Dorchester counties.

Colleton is a county of 1,048 square miles. It has a population of 26,268, including 14,019 (or 53 per cent) Negroes. Its county seat, Walterboro, which lies at the junction of two principal interstate highways, is a town of 3,300 persons. Since it is located near the center of both counties, Walterboro serves as the headquarters for the bi-county regional library.

Dorchester, adjoining Colleton on its northeast border, contains only 569 square miles; and its population is 19,928, including 11,439 (or 59 per cent) Negroes. Its principal retail center is Summerville, a town of 3,023 inhabitants. Unlike Colleton, Dorchester has no centrally located community. Summerville, only 25 miles from Charleston, lies barely within the county's border, near its southeast end. St. George, a town of 1,900, lies at the other end of the county.

Both counties are situated in the poor, southeastern section of the state. They are predominantly agricultural, rural, and undeveloped. Together they have an area of 1,617 square miles, a population of 46,000 (including over 25,000 Negroes), and (in 1939) an assessed valuation of \$7,500,000.

Before the WPA there were three small, local "libraries" in these two counties. In Colleton County there was the Walterboro Library Society with a collection of 3,000 volumes and \$200 annual support. In Dorchester Summerville had the "Timrod Library," a semi-private subscription circulating library with 5,600 volumes and an income of \$1,000 a year. St. George also had a "public library" with 1,200 volumes and \$100 annual income. Summerville alone had a paid "librarian."

From the beginning the bi-county demonstration led something of a "hand-to-mouth" existence. Begun early in 1937, it drifted along for months without a mobile distributing unit, and without strong support from the counties themselves. During its first year the project obtained a cash contribution of \$770 from schools and interested organizations representing both counties. The following year Colleton contributed only \$69, although Dor-

chester raised \$443, largely from the County Board of Education. During 1939-40 each county board gave less than \$250 as a token contribution to the service.

Because of various delays it was April, 1938 (or more than a year after its inauguration), before the demonstration was able to start county-wide service with a "confiscated" WPA truck. Moreover, it was not until December, 1939 (after almost three years of make-shift operation), that a regular bookmobile was obtained.

Although co-operating committees of citizens had worked with the project since 1937 an official Bi-County Library Board was not organized until late in 1940. Since then the area supervisor in charge of the demonstration has evidently tried to get this group to accept increasing responsibility in planning the bi-county program and in making the residents of the area acquainted with the aims and functions of the project. In March, 1941, however, the results were not very encouraging. At that time neither the Walterboro nor the Summerville libraries were yet wholeheartedly "sold" on the idea of pooling their resources.

According to 1941 reports, there were 27 WPA workers regularly employed on this bi-county demonstration. It had a total book stock of almost 15,000 volumes, including 1,500 on loan from the WPA. From time to time deposits of 150 volumes were being exchanged between the two counties.

Bookmobile service to schools, homes, and deposit stations throughout the bi-county area was being provided. Twice a month the traveling unit stopped at 60 different lending stops on 7 scheduled routes, covering a circuit of over 2,000 miles. Two-thirds of its regular stops were at schools. Through the courtesy of the NYA each stop is clearly marked with a sturdy wooden sign (see Fig. 19); and each deposit station displays a notice announcing the date and time of the bookmobile's next scheduled visit.

Negro library service is rendered largely through the Negro schools by means of deposited collections selected from a stock of books donated by Harvey D. Kelsey, a Negro philanthropist of Washington, D.C.

On the whole, this regional library demonstration cannot be considered an entirely successful experiment. It appears to have been undertaken without sufficient planning and equipment, and without an assurance of whole-hearted community co-operation.



Fig. 19.--Waiting for the bookmobile--"somewhere in Collettin's back woods."

From the beginning it seems that the WPA had had to take the initiative to keep the demonstration going. The pre-existing local libraries nominally were co-operating in the program, but not without reservations. Finally, the financial support contributed by the two counties was far too small to constitute a satisfactory basis for a strong and permanent area-wide library program. From the evidence available it appears to be at least open to question whether the authorities and tax-payers of these two counties ever seriously intended to support a permanent self-sufficient regional library system.

The Tri-County Regional Library.---The only other regional library demonstration undertaken by the South Carolina WPA project is the Tri-County experiment embracing Georgetown, Marion, and Horry¹⁷ counties. This demonstration, begun in the fall of 1940, represents a marked improvement over the Colleton-Dorchester project, since the tri-county area was somewhat more favorably suited to the development of an area-wide program, and since the entire undertaking was more systematically planned from the beginning.

The three counties comprising the tri-county region occupy

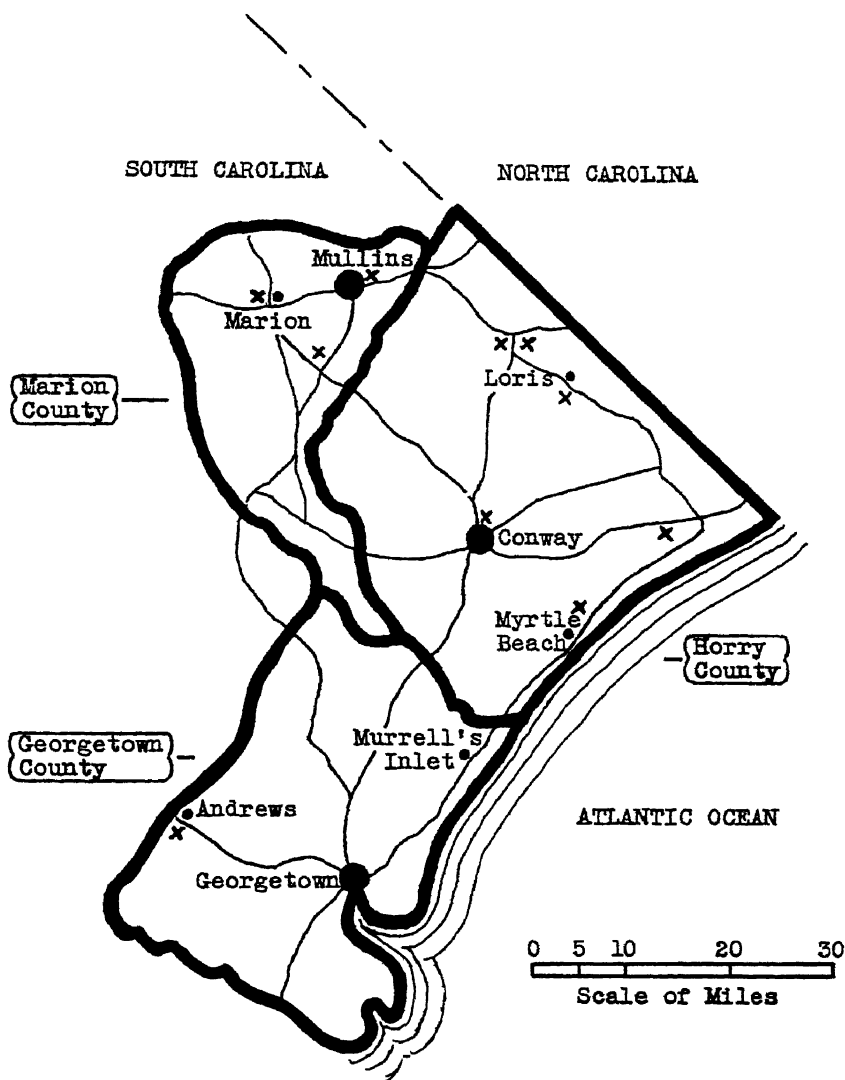
¹⁷Horry is pronounced "oh-ree."

approximately 2,450 square miles in the extreme eastern corner of the state. As can be seen in Figure 20, Georgetown and Horry counties, bordering the ocean from Charleston County to North Carolina, contain approximately one-third of the state's total coastal shoreline. The northeast boundary of Horry County follows the North Carolina state line due northwest for about 40 miles. Marion County lies immediately to the west of Horry County. Geographically Georgetown and Horry are typical of the coastal region, consisting of low marshy swamps and sandy flats.

Table 18 compares the three counties with regard to area, population, urbanization, assessed valuation, and library facilities in 1932. From these data it can be seen that Horry occupies almost one-half the total regional area and has almost half of the total population but barely one-third of the assessed valuation. Georgetown, on the other hand, with barely one-fourth of the region's population, has easily one-third of its total area and assessed valuation. Marion is by far the smallest of the three counties, yet alone has two cities of more than 5,000 inhabitants. The total assessed valuation of the region is approximately \$15,000,000. Thus, while none of the counties individually could maintain a strong area-wide library system, together they could support such a program at a reasonable standard of adequacy.

Unlike the Bi-County area this region has grown rapidly in population since 1930. During the decade ending in 1940 Colleton County increased only 1.7 per cent and Dorchester 5.1 per cent, while Marion increased 10.6 per cent and Georgetown and Horry increased 21.2 and 31.9 per cent respectively. The entire Tri-County region increased its population by more than 20,000 persons, or almost 24 per cent, during the same period.

The total population of the three counties in 1940 was 108,410. Of this number only 20,763, or one-fifth of the region's inhabitants, live in places of 2,500 or more persons. In other words these counties are predominantly rural. Throughout the entire region there are only four communities that can be called urban. Georgetown, the seat of Georgetown County, has a population of 5,559. Next to Charleston it is the largest coastal city in the state. Conway, Horry's principal trading center, is a thriving city of 5,000 which had barely 3,000 inhabitants in 1930. Marion County has only two towns worthy of mention. They are



- County headquarters for the regional library
- Public libraries or lending stations
- × School libraries with WPA workers

Fig. 20.--South Carolina's WPA-assisted Tri-County Regional Library area.

TABLE 18

AREA, POPULATION, ASSESSED VALUATION, AND PRE-WPA
LIBRARY HOLDINGS AND SUPPORT IN GEORGETOWN,
HORRY, AND MARION COUNTIES^a

Item	Georgetown	Horry	Marion	Total
Area in square miles	813	1,152	480	2,445
1940 population				
White.....	10,976	37,879	13,287	62,142
Negro.....	15,375	14,037	16,810	46,222
Other.....	1	35	10	46
Total...	26,352	51,951	30,107	108,410
Per cent Negro.	58.3	27.2	55.8	42.6
Per cent urban.	21.4	9.8	33.3	19.1
Per cent increase 1930-1940.....	21.2	31.9	10.6	23.8
Assessed valuation for 1939	\$5,519,450	\$4,979,452	\$4,195,685	\$14,694,587
Library holdings (vols.) in 1932	Georgetown 2,000	None	Marion 9,388 Mullins 3,000 Total 12,388	14,388
Library support in 1932	Georgetown \$96	None	Marion \$3,762 Mullins \$ 420 Total \$4,182	\$4,278

^a Sources: Sixteenth Census of the United States; 1939 Report of the Comptroller of South Carolina; and Mary E. Frayser, Libraries of South Carolina, op. cit.

Marion (5,746 inhabitants) and Mullins (4,392 inhabitants) which lie 8 miles apart in the northern section of the county.

Besides these four urban centers the Tri-County region has 3 villages of from 1,000 to 2,000 inhabitants. The largest of these is Andrews, a town of 2,008 persons, on the western edge of Georgetown County. The other two are in Horry County. Myrtle Beach, a resort town of 1,597, is on the ocean; and Loris, a village of 1,238 lies inland, near the North Carolina state line.

In Georgetown County the principal agricultural crops, formerly consisting of rice and indigo, are corn and cotton. Logging and the manufacture of turpentine from an extensive growth of native pine provide a second major source of revenue for the county. The city of Georgetown, once an important plantation port, now depends heavily upon a large pulp mill to support a large proportion of its population. Finally, along the entire seaboard, a substantial trade is carried on in various species of native sea food, including fish, oysters, shrimp, and crabs.

Marion county is dominated by the two cities of Marion and Mullins. Marion is a quiet, attractive village, with a neat public square and well landscaped parks, a pre-twentieth century court house, and a good, though conservative, public library, said to be "the first tax-supported public library in South Carolina."¹⁸ Today the industries of Marion include a large lumber mill, a veneer and brick plant, an oil mill, and an iron works on the outskirts of town.

Mullins, the largest tobacco market in the state, is a "lackadaisical little town" except in late summer, when, with the annual tobacco auctions in progress, it becomes "a bustling metropolis" for two to three months.¹⁹ At this time it is also an important center for marketing cotton, the other principal crop in this section of the state.

Before the WPA there were three local public libraries in the tri-county region--two in Marion County and one in Georgetown. The one in Marion alone was entirely tax-supported. In 1932 it had a collection of almost 10,000 volumes and an annual

¹⁸Federal Writers' Project, op. cit., p. 369.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 368.

income of \$3,762. Mullins also had a library of 3,000 volumes at this time; but its support was only \$420. Georgetown's library, with a book stock of 2,000, existed on less than \$100 a year, obtained from subscriptions and fees.

Before the tri-county regional experiment was undertaken all three counties had participated individually in the WPA library assistance program. Each had attempted to establish independent area-wide library service with a WPA-rented bookmobile and a small loan of project-owned books. Conway, the principal city of Horry County, had also organized an independent public library, in 1938.

In the summer of 1940 these counties became interested in the possibilities of pooling their resources to develop area-wide library service on a regional basis, and the WPA offered to assist them in organizing a permanent tri-county library system. As a first step it made a survey of the entire area, to provide a basis for planning a sound regional demonstration. Detailed data for each county were compiled on its area, location, road conditions, population, wealth, industries, assessed valuation, indebtedness, schools, organizations, and on its total public, private, and school library facilities. From this survey a plan was developed whereby existing libraries could be used to provide a nucleus for an integrated public and school library service for the whole area.

The special features of the regional program were to be:

1. The merger of the public and county libraries in each county.
2. The pooling of the book collections of all three counties.
3. The interchange of borrowing privileges throughout the system.
4. The development of a union catalog of holdings of all libraries.
5. The interloan of any title upon request.
6. The periodic rotation of deposit collections from county to county.
7. Contractual agreements between the WPA and the participating counties and libraries.
8. The election of an interlocking regional library board.

In September the WPA engaged a professionally trained supervisor to serve temporarily as Tri-County Regional Librarian. It rented a new bookmobile chassis to replace one that had worn out in Horry County, and loaned 1,200 new volumes to the demonstration to supplement the nucleus of titles already available in the region. Upon taking up her new position the supervisor drew up contracts merging existing county and city library facilities in each county and organized a regional library board representing the county boards of education, the participating public libraries, and the Commissioners of each county.

Since each county already had a bookmobile and one or more basic book collections, a headquarters for area-wide service was established in each county, instead of one to serve all three counties. Two of these centers, naturally, were located in Georgetown and Conway. In Marion County the regional headquarters, originally in Marion, was moved to Mullins early in 1941, as a new library building with facilities to house it there was then nearing completion.

During the winter of 1940-41 bookmobile routes were re-scheduled to disregard county lines and to provide more efficient operation and coverage. An inventory of each county's total book stock was taken and numerous unclassified non-fiction titles in the various county collections were given Dewey Decimal numbers. Borrowing privileges were then extended to all registered residents of the entire region by all of the participating libraries. In January a systematic bi-monthly plan of rotating books was inaugurated when Horry County transferred 300 of its volumes to Marion, Marion transferred 300 of its books to Georgetown, and Georgetown transferred a collection of 300 titles to Horry. Needless to say, a record of these transfers was kept at each county headquarters with the complete regional inventory so that any title in the system could be located promptly if needed for an interloan.

Since a basic service objective of this demonstration has been to make every book in the region available to a borrower in any of the three counties, special requests were an important feature of the program. Lists of the new books loaned to the demonstration by the WPA were carried by each bookmobile, to assist rural borrowers and school teachers in requesting specific titles to be delivered on its next return trip. Titles not on

the truck were located through the union catalog at its county headquarters. If a given title was not held by any library in the system it was placed on a "want list" and considered for purchase when book orders were being compiled. Among the 124 titles requested during the month of March, 1941, were Uncle Tom's Cabin, Robinson Crusoe, Tobacco Road, Vasari's Lives of the Painters, Rebecca, Out of the Fog, Mein Kampf, Oliver Wiswell, Poems of William Blake, and For Whom the Bell Tolls.

In addition to its function of integrating the existing library facilities of the region and extending bookmobile service to rural areas and schools (see Fig. 21) this regional library demonstration has also brought about the establishment of new local libraries and reading rooms in a few communities formerly without any kind of library center. In Horry County, for example, it has helped the towns of Loris (1,238 population) and Myrtle Beach (1,597 population) to start small libraries of their own as branches of the regional library system. In Georgetown County it has begun community reading rooms with deposit collections in Andrews (2,008 population) and Murrell's Inlet (210 population). (See Fig. 22.)

By the end of March, 1941, the Tri-County Regional Library demonstration was assisting or operating a total of 23 different units, including 4 established public libraries, 4 reading rooms, a mending unit, and 15 school libraries. It had 47 workers on the project, including public library aides, school library and reading room attendants, book menders, and bookmobile operators and aides. The total bookstock of the system included over 30,000 volumes, of which 13,000 were owned by the counties, 18,000 by the public libraries of Marion, Mullins, and Conway, and 2,500 by the WPA. During March the three bookmobiles traveled 2,812 miles on 37 routes, making 286 stops. At this time the entire demonstration had almost 10,000 registered borrowers and a total circulation of approximately 18,000 a month.

Service to the 46,000 Negroes who comprise 42 per cent of the region's population has been deliberately postponed by those in charge of the demonstration. Since such service as these folk receive throughout the state is characteristically extended from agencies which were established to serve the white population, it was deemed expedient to concentrate first on developing a strong and permanent regional system, without forcing the racial issue.



Fig. 21.—Direct bookmobile service to rural homes in Horry County.



Fig. 22.—WPA community reading room at Murrell's Inlet (Georgetown County).

With such great differences as exist in these counties in the proportion of Negroes to white persons, this issue might well have become a serious point of contention among the participants to the demonstration, had it been raised when contracts were being considered. It might even have caused the entire undertaking to fail.

This Tri-County Regional Library demonstration was visited in behalf of this study during the month of May, 1941. At that time it was well organized and ready to operate smoothly until a regular income could be obtained from the participating counties for its independent maintenance. Unfortunately the Regional Librarian who had developed the program from its beginning left the project in June, 1941, to move to another state. With the demonstration barely under way one cannot predict its ultimate result. However, by sound planning and organization the program has already provided the counties concerned with an adequate framework for a permanent regional library system, if when WPA aid is finally withdrawn they really want area-wide service continued.

Service to Special Groups of Readers

The preceding portions of this chapter have emphasized the WPA's function of assisting in general public library development in South Carolina. This section treats some of the library project's services to special groups of readers, such as children and teachers in public schools, Negroes, and organized groups of citizens with specific interests.

Service to schools.--Since there is no active state library agency in South Carolina the state-wide library project is officially sponsored by the State Board of Education, and individual area-wide demonstrations are co-sponsored by county Boards of Education. Unlike many states South Carolina has no state-supported program for the development of school libraries. Thus the WPA in this state has undertaken to include library assistance to schools as a regular feature of most of its county-wide public library demonstrations.

There are five types of assistance which the South Carolina WPA project renders in behalf of school libraries throughout the state. These five types of assistance are:

1. Furnishing and training WPA workers to staff school libra-

ries or to assist regular librarians or teacher-librarians.

2. Supplementing school library resources with deposit collections and serving teachers and pupils directly by including school stops on "all bookmobile routes.
3. Cataloging uncataloged school libraries.
4. Assisting schools in selecting additions to their own libraries.
5. Repairing damaged or worn books for school libraries.

From such statistics as are available it is not possible to show precisely what proportion of the facilities of the South Carolina project are devoted to the improvement of school library service. However, figures on employment, cataloging, book repair, and circulation indicate that over half of the entire program benefits school libraries directly.

In March, 1941, almost half of all certified workers on the project were employed directly in staffing or assisting more than 250 school libraries. At that time over half of the circulation from bookmobiles throughout the state occurred during stops at schools. From 1937 to 1940 almost half of the cataloging done by WPA workers was for school libraries; and during the same period more than three times as many books were repaired for schools as for public libraries. All told, by June, 1940, the project had cataloged 18,000 volumes and had repaired more than 1,000,000 volumes for the school libraries of South Carolina. In the spring of 1941 they were still cataloging school library books at the rate of 500 to 700 a month and were repairing from 8,000 to 10,000 school library volumes a month. During 1938-39 the schools directly under the library project had a book stock of 208,986 volumes, 69,732 borrowers, and a circulation of 1,701,154.²⁰

Service to Negroes.—In a recent study of library service to Negroes in the South it is pointed out that in the 13 states comprising the Southern Region²¹ only one-fifth of the Negro population are provided with public library service, and that of the

²⁰Federal Works Agency, Work Projects Administration, State of South Carolina, "Statewide Library Project Annual Report, July, 1938-July, 1939." (Mimeographed.)

²¹Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

6,000,000 Negroes without library service 2,000,000 live in areas where such service is available to white inhabitants but is denied to Negroes.²² In 1932 only three counties (Greenville, Charleston, and Richland) were giving some library service to Negroes. In 1939, according to Mrs. Gleason's study (which does not include WPA-assisted service) almost 700,000 Negroes, or 85 per cent of the state's total Negro population, were without access to library facilities.²³

In commenting upon the attitude of state and local officials toward providing services for Negroes, the above-mentioned study makes the interesting observation that most southern communities are far less interested in developing adequate Negro library facilities than they are in merely "being able to say that something is being done for the Negro."²⁴ South Carolina is certainly no exception in this regard. Thus, the extent to which the WPA has developed library service for Negroes is hardly comparable to what it has done for the state's white population. By comparison with the situation in 1932, however, WPA-assisted library facilities for Negroes in 1941 represent a substantial gain.

As early as 1936 the South Carolina WPA library project began to assist in the development of library service for Negroes. It placed WPA workers in a number of the larger Negro school libraries, which were then opened to the Negro public. It began a system of service by small deposits in Negro community centers in some counties and assisted established libraries in opening and staffing Negro branches in certain cities and towns. It even undertook to provide bookmobile service to rural Negroes in a few counties. Finally, it co-operated with philanthropic groups in preparing and distributing collections of books donated for the exclusive use of Negroes.

In March, 1941, library units operated by WPA workers were serving an estimated population of almost 50,000 Negroes in 12 different counties (see Fig. 23). Most of these units were in schools, since it is difficult to secure adequate separate quarters for Negro public libraries and since the proportion of adult Negroes in this state who read with facility is relatively

²²Eliza A. Gleason, The Southern Negro and the Public Library (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 108.

²³Ibid., p. 90.

²⁴Ibid., p. 186.

small. The total annual circulation of WPA-assisted Negro libraries since 1938 has been from 140,000 to 150,000. During most of this time the project was employing from 25 to 30 regular workers on these Negro units.

The book stock of these library facilities for Negroes now totals more than 35,000 volumes, including about 500 new volumes purchased with WPA funds. These project-owned books, selected with a view toward supplementing existing collections with recent materials suited to the interests of this racial group, emphasize popular works by and about the Negro such as those recommended by the Julius Rosenwald Fund.²⁵ These special Negro collections, loaned as deposits to individual Negro lending units, constitute a notably popular feature of the service. As a rule the permanent holdings of Negro libraries in South Carolina are not inspiring, having been obtained as donations from philanthropic individuals or as discards from other library systems.

Among the outstanding examples of WPA-assisted library service to Negroes are the units in Greenville and Lancaster counties. The city of Greenville has two Negro library units, each staffed with a full-time librarian and a WPA aide. One is at the Sterling High School, which has a large, well-equipped library of its own. The other is the Phyllis Wheatley Library, a regular Negro branch of the Greenville Public Library, which serves the entire county. One day each week the library's bookmobile makes a separate circuit of the county to give direct service to rural Negroes. In Lancaster the Kelsey Library, likewise a Negro branch of the public library, is the center of Negro library service for the county. It has a book collection of almost 9,000 volumes, and has a trained, full-time Negro librarian and a WPA assistant. It delivers monthly deposits of about 75 books to six Negro schools in the county; and five teachers from other schools come in once a month to borrow 30 or 40 volumes each.

Three special aspects of library service to Negroes in this state concern the Jeanes Industrial Teachers, the "Harvey Kelsey Collections," and the "Faith Cabin Libraries."

The Jeanes teachers, privately financed Negro specialists

²⁵ Tennessee State Department of Education, The Negro, a Selected List for School Libraries of Books by or about the Negro in Africa and America (Nashville, Tennessee: revised and reprinted through the courtesy of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, 1941).

in vocational education, are traveling advisers who assist colored schools throughout the state in developing practical instruction in manual arts and crafts. Owing to the lack of separate bookmobile facilities for Negroes, these teachers have helped the WPA project materially in many counties by personally assisting in the distribution of deposit collections of books to rural Negro schools not otherwise reached by county library demonstrations.

The "Harvey Kelsey Collections" refer to books collected by Harvey Kelsey, a Negro of Washington, D.C., for the purpose of providing the colored inhabitants of his native state, South Carolina, with free library materials. The Kelsey Library in Lancaster was begun around a nucleus of books obtained through his efforts. The Colleton-Dorchester Bi-County service to Negroes was also inaugurated with a collection of several thousand volumes obtained through his efforts in 1938. In the spring of 1939 deposits from this collection were distributed by project workers to some 20 Negro schools in the two counties.

The "Faith Cabin Libraries" constitute another attempt to make books available to Negroes by soliciting gifts from persons outside of the state. Oddly enough these libraries came into being through the devotion of a young, white clergyman to an old Negro schoolmaster who had befriended him during his childhood and had helped him to complete his education. In the midst of the depression this young man, Willie Lee Buffington, desirous of doing something for his old Negro friend, wrote to selected persons in the North asking for books to start a small library for the colored folk near his childhood home. In this way he obtained a substantial number of volumes which he then presented to "Uncle Euriah" Simpkins, the old school master. With these books as a nucleus more were collected, and on a wooded knoll overlooking "Uncle Eury's" home in Saluda County, the nearby Negroes built a log lodge to house the collection and christened it their "Faith Cabin Library," since it had been "founded on faith" (see Figs. 24 and 25).

From this beginning similar libraries were developed by and for the Negroes in a number of other communities, such as Belton (Anderson County), Plumb Branch (McCormick), Pendleton (Anderson), and St. Matthews (Calhoun). All told more than 20 such "libraries" are said to have started as a result of Willie Buffington's original idea. Most of them have relatively poor



Fig. 24.--The first "Faith Cabin Library,"
Saluda County, South Carolina.



Fig. 25.--"Uncle Euriah" Simpkins

collections of books, since they depend upon donations for most of their holdings. A few of them, however, staffed with WPA workers, are giving service that is more adequate than that offered to Negroes by most communities in the state.

The Faith Cabin Library at Pendleton has given particularly good service with very limited resources. Its WPA worker, a fine type of Negro, has developed a popular shelf of books by Negro authors, has obtained subscriptions for Negro periodicals, has sponsored successful reading clubs and contests, has organized two regular story-hour groups, and has observed such occasions as Book Week and Health Week with special library programs. This library has its own collection of approximately 3,000 volumes, including many standard titles obtained as a gift from the Newark (N.J.) Public Library.

In concluding this discussion of library service to Negroes in South Carolina it must be pointed out that in spite of the activities of established libraries, the WPA, and private philanthropy, few Negroes in this state yet have what a white community would consider adequate library facilities. By and large, the books that are available in collections assembled for Negroes are exceedingly dull, or out of date, or both. Thanks to WPA assistance it can at least be said today in more communities than before that "something is being done for the Negro"--to use Mrs. Gleason's apt phrase once again. However, in both quantitative and qualitative terms the library services available to Negroes in South Carolina still fall far short of any reasonable minimum standard of adequacy which might be named.

Reading clubs and contests.--Wherever groups of citizens with special interests have programs involving the use of library materials the WPA state-wide project in South Carolina has endeavored to adapt its county-wide services to meet these needs. Thus, just as its area-wide demonstrations have been helped by the support of such organizations as County Councils of Farm Women, Home Demonstration Clubs, American Legion Auxiliary chapters, Parent-Teacher Associations, and local book clubs or literary societies, so the project has provided these groups with special library services from time to time. The most important way in which it has assisted individual organizations has been by co-sponsoring reading clubs and contests conducted for their members. The part played by the WPA library project in the reading program

of one such organization is treated in detail, as an example.

In 1939 and again in 1940 the WPA co-operated with the South Carolina Home Economics Association in conducting reading contests for rural residents. Locally the contest was sponsored by Home Demonstration Clubs and other community groups. The object of the contest was to read and report on at least 8 non-fiction books from a selected list of titles. The WPA assisted the Association by preparing and mimeographing an appropriate list of approved books, by distributing these lists through its circulating outlets, and by maintaining as many of the recommended titles as possible on its bookmobiles, library stations, and reading rooms. WPA workers also collected book reports from contestants, and kept records to determine who had successfully completed the program when the contest closed. All participants fulfilling the eight-book requirement in six months were to receive a certificate testifying to their achievement.

In 1939 the book list for the contest included 245 titles. In 1940 this was increased to 440 to provide a wider choice. The groups of subjects in which reading was to be done were Food and Nutrition, Clothing and Home Management, Family Relations and Child Care, Personality and Etiquette, Social Sciences, Fine Arts, Everyday Science, Education and Vocations, History, Biography, Travel, and Religion.

Each year 7 different counties participated actively in the program. In 1939 more than 400 books were read and reported on by the 47 persons winning certificates. In 1940 the circulation of required titles exceeded 500. In all, during these two contests more than 150 persons completed the program successfully, and many more took part but failed to finish in time or to turn in reports on all their reading. In relation to the state's total population this achievement is certainly not remarkable; but to the rural participants, formerly without library service, this program of directed reading demonstrated how libraries can help them to learn about subjects affecting their everyday life.

Two other groups with which the WPA library project has co-operated in the conduct of reading programs are the state Congress of Parents and Teachers and the American Legion Auxiliary. The latter project, though not completed when data for this study were assembled, is of special interest today because of its relation to the problem of national morale in civilian defense.

The American Legion Auxiliary, in the interest of increasing an understanding of democracy and an appreciation of our American heritage, decided to conduct an "American Way Reading Club" as its primary educational undertaking for 1941. Following the pattern of the Home Economics reading contest described above, the program was begun, with WPA assistance, early in the year. A list of approved books, based on Democracy, a reading guide prepared by Benson Y. Landis for the American Library Association,²⁶ was mimeographed by the WPA and distributed throughout the state. The subjects included in this list were: About Our People, American Inventors and Inventions, American Literature, The American System, Democracy, Economic Issues, Interesting Places, International Relations, Negroes, Our American Neighbors, Our Possessions, and The Story of Our Country. As in previous contests, the WPA supplied its lending outlets with as many of the recommended titles as possible.

Early reports indicated that this program was arousing considerable interest in counties where there were enough books to meet the demand. In some communities teachers enrolled whole classes of school children as club members. In the Tri-County region two or more shelves on each bookmobile were devoted to "American Way" books. Posters in local libraries also helped to increase participation in several cities and towns. One county (Cherokee) reported a circulation of over 600 books to reading club enrollees during its first month.²⁷

As has been noted, the actual volume of reading that is stimulated by club or contest programs is not phenomenal. In a state as retarded in library development as South Carolina, however, any undertaking which leads rural inhabitants to read socially significant books cannot be dismissed as unimportant. The WPA project, therefore, welcomed the opportunity to adapt its services to meet the library needs of special groups such as these in the realization that in so doing it in turn wins their active support for the state-wide development of libraries.

²⁶Benson Y. Landis, Democracy: A Reading List (Chicago: American Library Association, 1940) (Published as a supplement to the ALA Bulletin, January, 1940).

²⁷At the conclusion of the "American Way Reading Club" program certificates were awarded to 441 persons.

Specialized Project Activities

The preceding section of this chapter discusses some of the services the South Carolina state-wide library project has provided for special groups or classes of readers. This section deals with four of the project's specialized functions which in themselves do not constitute actual library service but which are important staff activities closely related to the success of the entire program. These four functions are cataloging and book selection services, book repair, workers' training, and publicity.

Cataloging and book selection services.--In South Carolina the WPA library project performs two kinds of cataloging and book selection service. Like other state-wide projects it selects and catalogs books bought with WPA funds and apportions them to individual counties for use in area-wide demonstrations. As a special feature not common to most WPA projects it also offers aid in book selection and "co-operative cataloging" services to established school and public libraries throughout the state.

The selection and cataloging of project-owned books in South Carolina follows the practice of most state-wide projects and requires little description. The work is centralized at the state headquarters in a single unit consisting of a professionally trained supervisor, three skilled workers and one of intermediate grade. Books are classified according to the Dewey Decimal system, and both descriptive cataloging and subject headings are kept to a very simple form. By the end of June, 1940, this unit cataloged well over 25,000 volumes for project use.

When this project began to offer its "co-operative cataloging" service to school libraries in 1936 it was one of the first (if not the very first) of the states to undertake this function as a regular feature of WPA library assistance. Actually the service referred to here is not "co-operative cataloging" as the term is usually applied (for example, to the arrangement among scholarly libraries for the co-operative cataloging of unusual titles not cataloged by the Library of Congress). Instead it is simply the cataloging and classification by the WPA's central cataloging unit of the collections of established but previously uncataloged libraries.

The WPA's cataloging service for established libraries is

called "co-operative" because the participating libraries submit author, title, and imprint data for their books, the State Department of Education furnishes materials, WPA workers make, arrange, and deliver the necessary author, title, and subject cards, and the University of South Carolina provides quarters where the work is performed. The charge for the service is only three cents per title, just enough to reimburse the Department of Education for materials. Libraries that take advantage of the plan agree to keep their catalogs up-to-date, after they have been received. Each library using the service is sent a complete, properly filed dictionary catalog and a shelf list. Since one object of the plan is to improve the holdings of school libraries only titles on standard lists (such as the A.L.A. Catalog, and the H. W. Wilson Company's Standard Catalog) are cataloged. Recently the service was extended to include small public libraries with uncataloged collections.

By the end of June, 1940, the South Carolina project had cataloged 18,000 volumes for 70 different school libraries throughout the state. In the summer of 1941 the Library Service Section in Washington made extensive use of this state's experience when it prepared an official circular²⁸ describing the organization and operation of a Central Cataloging Service for state-wide projects. The "co-operative cataloging" service was established because the great majority of school libraries in South Carolina lacked both the necessary bibliographical tools and the trained personnel needed to perform this function efficiently.

In March, 1940, for a similar reason the WPA offered the services of its central technical unit to assist established libraries in selecting books for purchase. During the first year this service has been used largely by small public libraries. The service is free and the local librarian is under no obligation to follow the WPA's suggestions. The librarian merely states the amount of money she wishes to spend, specifies roughly the proportion of fiction, non-fiction, adult, and juvenile titles she wants, and any special subjects for which specific recommendations are desired. The trained unit supervisor consults the

²⁸U.S. Work Projects Administration, Central Cataloging Service ("WPA Technical Series," Library Service Circular No. 4; Washington, D.C.: Work Projects Administration, October 31, 1941).

book selection tools at her command, makes up a list meeting these specifications, and returns it to the library in question. During the first four months of operation the WPA book selection service compiled tentative buying lists for eleven different libraries throughout the state.

Book repair.--The rehabilitation of soiled, mutilated, or use-worn books and magazines is a housekeeping function of all library service systems. In the early days of library work relief it offered a simple and inexpensive method of creating widespread employment for relatively unskilled persons on short notice, and was therefore one of the first types of activity provided for white-collar workers. In some states, as workers became proficient in this type of work it was extended to include actual binding and rebinding. Moreover, some projects liberalized their activities to permit the extensive repair of school textbooks as well as library materials. By the end of 1938, however, when it became evident that such mending units were performing considerable work which properly belonged to commercial binderies, the WPA rigidly curtailed such activities to eliminate all actual binding and the repair of textbooks by library projects.

TABLE 19

NUMBER OF VOLUMES REPAIRED BY WPA MENDING UNITS
IN SOUTH CAROLINA, 1936-1941^a

Period Covered	For Schools	For Public Libraries	WPA-Owned Books	Total
1936-1937.....	.....	.....	.....	476,725
1937-1938.....	485,192 ^b	155,058	.....	640,250
1938-1939.....	346,691	123,128	.....	469,819
1939-1940.....	172,993	44,320	1,260	218,573
1940-1941.....	86,294 ^c	68,748 ^c	3,177 ^c	194,396
1936-1941.....	1,091,170 ^c	391,254 ^c	4,437 ^c	1,999,763

^aSources: Annual Reports of the South Carolina State-wide WPA Library Project.

^bIncludes 291,804 textbooks repaired for schools.

^cBreakdowns of data for the year 1940-41 are for the period from July, 1940, through March, 1941, only.

The only noteworthy aspect of WPA book repair activity in South Carolina is its increasing consolidation into fewer and larger units. Originally there were local mending projects in every county. In March, 1941, these had been consolidated into 25 units employing 174 workers. Ultimately it was intended to consolidate the work into four strong, central units, one to serve each of the WPA administrative districts in the state.

Statistics on WPA book repair in South Carolina from July, 1936, through June, 1941, appear in Table 19. During this period the average cost per volume has ranged from 30 to 40 cents.

Workers' training.---In-service training is an important element in the entire WPA library assistance program. Most project employees have never been engaged in library work before receiving relief employment, and many of them lack the accuracy, orderliness, self-assurance, and understanding required by such work when they are first assigned to a library project. Many project employees would be considered unemployable in a normal labor market. In the interest of furthering project efficiency and improving morale among the workers, informal but systematic training has been organized as an integral part of WPA library service projects.

In South Carolina monthly training meetings for all project employees were begun as early as 1936. At that time instruction was limited to a discussion of very simple library tools and routines and to the development of self-reliance and such habits as neatness and accuracy. Since 1938 the training program has been organized on a district basis, and three-day institutes have sometimes been held in place of one-day monthly meetings.

In each district one supervisor is in charge of training in book repair, another in library methods and publicity, another in reference tools, and another in extension or bookmobile service. Like other states South Carolina has developed training manuals to implement its instruction program. For instance, it has a 68-page manual on county-wide bookmobile service, a 95-page one on book-mending techniques, and others on publicity and general library procedures and tools. These manuals and courses introduce all project employees to such matters as book arrangement, filing, charging methods, and the uses of such tools as card catalogs, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and yearbooks. Each worker also receives special instruction in the duties of his particular

job.

The object of WPA workers' training is not to develop them into librarians. Its purpose is solely to qualify them to perform efficiently and under supervision many of the clerical duties that are required in the operation of any library service system.

As a corollary to its program of training for workers many projects also conduct district meetings and training institutes for their supervisory staffs. Such gatherings keep individual supervisors posted on administrative changes affecting the project, provide an opportunity for staff members to discuss common problems, and serve to improve morale throughout the project. The formal topics treated at such institutes in South Carolina have included organization and administration, libraries and national defense, the purpose and technique of supervision, project relations with established libraries, workers' training and discipline, problems in evaluating project achievement, and the nature and significance of the "sponsor's contribution."

Publicity.--Planned and effective publicity is an essential feature of any program with the objective of permanently improving library facilities by demonstration. Thus the final aspect of the South Carolina library project to be treated in this chapter is its publicity, or "public relations." The following is a record of this project's use of publicity.

In 1937, 1938, 1939, and 1940 the State Supervisor prepared and distributed mimeographed annual reports depicting the scope and progress of the project and containing testimonials of gratitude from important beneficiaries of WPA-operated library services. In the spring of 1940 the Anderson Daily Mail printed a special "Library and Education Edition" describing South Carolina's library facilities and needs and telling of county-wide services then operating with WPA assistance. In June, 1940, a large graphic exhibit and a moving picture were prepared and shown at the annual conference of the American Library Association, in Cincinnati. In the same year material for articles on Negro library service and rural libraries was supplied to authors for national magazines. From time to time special reports on the project are prepared and sent to Washington for the information of the Library Service Section. The State Supervisor has appeared before various educational organizations and citizen's gatherings

to explain the project's objectives and facilities whenever she has been called upon to do so. Locally the individual supervisors of county demonstrations are responsible for such public relations as are maintained.

The noteworthy characteristic of most of this project's publicity is that it appears to have been directed at a national rather than a state or local audience. As a result librarians in other parts of the nation have been made aware of what South Carolina has done or is doing with WPA assistance. In terms of the objective of developing permanent tax-supported library service, however, it is unfortunate that more use was not made of regular, planned, and locally-directed publicity in individual county-wide demonstrations. Such publicity could focus attention on the ultimate goal of the project and might help materially in achieving it.

Summary

This chapter has undertaken to show how the opportunity presented by the federal work relief program has been used to further the development of library service in a specific state. South Carolina was selected for study because, like the entire Southeast region, its geographic, economic, and social conditions are not conducive to the development of libraries along traditional lines of organization and support. In 1935 South Carolina, a relatively poor and predominantly rural state with few libraries and no active state library agency, offered a fertile field for testing the soundness of multi-county or regional units for the government and administration of area-wide library service. This study is concerned with the extent to which the South Carolina WPA library project recognized and took advantage of this particular opportunity.

The record of the project by the middle of 1941 is imposing when quantitative comparisons are made with library facilities in the state before WPA. Thanks to federal assistance many sections were receiving library service for the first time, new local libraries and reading rooms had been established, many more Negroes had access to "free books" than before. Large numbers of school and public library books had been repaired and restored to usefulness. Many school libraries had been cataloged for the first time. More than 30 bookmobiles had been obtained for use

in demonstrations, and the suitability of this method of reaching rural readers in this state had been quite thoroughly tested. Co-operative, centralized facilities had been developed for the selection, processing, and repair of books. In short, as a direct result of WPA assistance the state-wide support and use of public and school library facilities for both races had increased by 1941 to a notable degree, compared with South Carolina's library service in 1932.

From the point of view of official state recognition of any responsibility for library development, however, the legislature was apparently still no more inclined to take action in 1941 than it had been before the WPA, for in 1942 the State Library Board was still without any appropriation from the state.

In terms of the opportunity confronting the WPA in 1935, the record of the project is much less fortunate than might be desired. For a number of reasons the potentialities for the development of strong, area-wide systems of library service in this state have been only partially realized.

WPA library assistance in South Carolina has been diffuse rather than concentrated, extensive instead of intensive; and therefore its achievements, viewed objectively, reflect this lack of control, direction, or focus. Proportionately more individual communities in this state have received some benefit from the program than in many other states. Few communities, however, have received enough carefully directed benefits to provide a strong basis for a permanent, efficient, independent library service system.

Many reasons could be advanced to explain why the program took the form that it did in this state. Urgency, expediency, the distribution of relief loads, local pressures, and even "politics" might be praised or blamed for the manner in which the library project evolved. In a word, most of the reasons are merely part of a broad situation in which WPA library assistance suddenly became available in a state not yet prepared to put it to the best possible use. Unlike states with a nucleus of strong libraries, South Carolina lacked both the experience in library development and the organized library leadership essential to sound library planning. Without either an active state agency or a clear plan for library development its WPA program naturally tended to become diffused, in its desire to benefit all sections of the state

equally.

In fairness it should be noted that much good actually was accomplished by the project. Many sections of the state were formerly without books or libraries. With WPA assistance they received the benefits of both to a limited degree.

In 1941 the WPA library project was undertaking to survey the state, evaluate its progress, and redirect its entire program as a result of its findings. Thus, by 1941 it had learned from experience the necessity of planning on the basis of existing facts. In 1935 South Carolina was sorely in need of advice and assistance in planning how it might best use its WPA library aid. Today its project leaders realize that the state's economic and geographic limitations make regional units the most efficient basis for library organization and support. However, after encouraging the development of individual county libraries for five years their task of obtaining whole-hearted inter-county collaboration is not so easy as it might once have been.

The experience of South Carolina demonstrates that a basic feature of any future nation-wide program of aid for libraries should be a provision for advice and assistance in planning for states in need of such professional guidance. Since 1938 the Library Service Section has performed this function for the WPA. It is only unfortunate that such help was not available three years earlier, when it was most needed.

CHAPTER VII

WPA LIBRARY ASSISTANCE IN MINNESOTA: A PROGRAM OF CONTROLLED PUBLIC LIBRARY DEMONSTRATIONS IN SELECTED COUNTIES

This chapter constitutes the second case study of a state-wide WPA library service project. It deals with the Minnesota project from its inauguration in October, 1938 to its official termination May 1, 1942.

Minnesota was selected for several reasons. Its geographic, economic, and social setting—including the development of public library service in the state—is fairly representative of the Midwest, the region¹ which received more WPA library aid than any other section of the country. The rural library demonstration program in this state was begun much later than in South Carolina, and consequently tends to reflect more closely the pattern of assistance developed by the WPA Library Service Section in Washington. Indeed, these two projects may be said to represent two separate stages in the evolution of WPA library assistance. Moreover, they serve to show how this program was adapted to strikingly different local conditions.

Instead of treating the Minnesota situation as a completely independent study, this chapter frequently stresses the characteristics in which it differs from that of South Carolina. Since the immediate objectives of the two projects were basically different, no attempt is made to compare them directly. Their main points of difference are indicated, therefore, only to suggest how variously WPA library assistance, considered as an experiment in federal aid, has been administered in individual states.

In general, this case study follows the pattern of treatment used in chapter vi. Thus, it begins with a description of

¹Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin—from H. W. Odum, Southern Regions of the United States (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 6.

Minnesota's natural, social, and economic backgrounds, and the nature and extent of its library facilities. It then considers the objectives, organization, and outstanding characteristics of the WPA state-wide library project. The third section traces the development of the project during the three and one-half years of its existence, and undertakes to interpret the results of the first six county library demonstrations. A fourth section calls attention to the major differences between WPA-assisted demonstration service and that rendered in areas already receiving county library service from established libraries. The final section of the chapter presents a summary and conclusions.

The Setting for WPA-Assisted Library Development

As stated in chapter vi, the character and strength of the public services in any state are conditioned by the potentialities of its geographic, economic, and human resources. This section, therefore, discusses these factors as they affect both the nature and the solution of the problem of library development in Minnesota.

Geography.²--The state of Minnesota is situated at the Canadian border of the United States midway between the Great Lakes and the Great Plains. It is over 400 miles long from North to South, and averages 240 miles in width. It occupies almost 85,000 square miles, or more than twice the area of South Carolina. The northeastern part of the state follows the shore of Lake Superior. Minnesota also has over 10,000 lakes of its own, which attract a large tourist trade each summer. Three great river systems originate in Minnesota, including the Mississippi, which forms its southeastern boundary.

Minnesota is richly endowed with natural resources. Over two-thirds of its area (notably its southern and western sections) consists of rich agricultural land. The northeastern section of the state is a natural forest area and also contains some of the richest iron ore deposits in the United States. The climate of Minnesota, though characterized by extreme summer and winter tem-

²The data on which this section is based was obtained from Minnesota: A State Guide, compiled and written by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (New York: The Viking Press, 1938).

peratures, is generally favorable for farming.

Unlike South Carolina, with its single cash-crop economy, Minnesota has developed a stable and diversified agricultural program. For several decades following the Civil War it was the chief wheat-producing state, and, with its enormous milling industry, was referred to as "the bread-basket of the nation." Since 1900, it has emphasized livestock, dairying, and meat-packing; so its wheat production has declined, and feed crops (corn, oats, and alfalfa), and barley, rye, and soy beans have become leading sources of farm income. However, the milling industry of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area is still eclipsed only by that of Buffalo. Minnesota is also an important source of potatoes, sugar beets, and other vegetable crops. It is a leading state in the production of beef, pork, mutton, and poultry products, and is exceeded by no other state in the manufacture of butter. It is progressive in its experiments with soil conservation and crop rotation. It is the home of the 4-H Club and Granger movements and has the largest number of co-operative undertakings (creameries, grain elevators, rural electrification, and producing and marketing associations) in America.

The major agricultural problems of the state are soil erosion, the utilization of uneconomic, cut-over forest land, and increasing farm tenancy since the depression and the drought of 1934. Lumbering was Minnesota's major industry before 1900, as new railroads gave convenient access to the state's vast hardwood and coniferous forests. However, because of the prodigal exploitation of this resource, the best timber was rapidly destroyed. Therefore, today a wide area in the northern part of the state is a wilderness of barren cut-over land, which can be restored to usefulness only by the slow process of belated reforestation.

Iron mining from the state's unusually rich and accessible ore deposits has been a major source of income for Minnesota since 1900. As in the case of the forests, this resource was exploited wastefully for many years following its discovery. Today, however, it is mined more economically, and efforts are being made to develop other more stable sources of livelihood to support the "range" country when the iron resources of the region finally become exhausted. Minnesota still supplies over 60 per cent of the iron mined in the United States.

Quarrying of granite and limestone, manufacturing of farm

machinery, refrigerators, and paper, fishing, and a growing summer resort and vacation trade in the widely advertised "Arrow-head" region are other locally important commercial enterprises.

Figure 26, "Land use in Minnesota," shows roughly which sections of the state are important for agriculture, lumbering, mining, quarrying and manufacturing.

In spite of the wasteful exploitation that has destroyed some of Minnesota's most valuable resources, the state as a whole still has the natural and physical essentials for a prosperous economy, primarily based on various forms of agriculture, mining, and the distribution of goods.

The state's library situation is directly related to its geography. In the southern and western sections the problem is one of integrating many small, independent local libraries into stronger, more efficient units giving area-wide service. In the northern and northeastern sections the problem concerns the equalization of library opportunity between the geographically concentrated, relatively wealthy cities of the iron range and the rest of the region, which is sparsely populated and largely unproductive at present.

Population.³--In 1940 Minnesota had 2,792,300 inhabitants, or one and one-half times the population of South Carolina. However, because of its greater area, Minnesota averages only 35 persons per square mile, in contrast to 62 for South Carolina. Minnesota's population is almost equally divided between urban and rural residents, while that of South Carolina is more than 75 per cent rural. Minnesota has almost four times as many persons living in urban communities. This is because it has three metropolitan centers (Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Duluth) with a total of 880,000 inhabitants, while no city in South Carolina is as large as 75,000.

The two states also differ strikingly in the character of their respective populations. Over 99 per cent of Minnesota's inhabitants are white, so, unlike South Carolina, where over 40 per cent of the population are Negroes, it is not confronted with the necessity of supporting separate library facilities for Ne-

³Based on U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930; Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940; and Minnesota: A State Guide, op. cit.

groes. On the other hand, 99 per cent of South Carolina's white population is native-born, while over 10 per cent of Minnesota's population is of foreign birth, and a considerably larger proportion is of foreign parentage. In 1930 over 55 per cent of Minnesota's inhabitants were either foreign-born or native-born of foreign or mixed parentage. Of this group 23 per cent, located largely in the central and southern part of the state, were of German origin; 19 per cent, in the central eastern and far northern counties, were of Swedish origin; and 18.8 per cent, in the west central and northwestern sections, were of Norwegian origin.

The educational level of Minnesota's population is considerably above that of South Carolina. In 1940, all but 7.5 per cent of Minnesota's inhabitants over twenty-four years of age had completed at least 5 years of grade school, while almost 35 per cent of this group in South Carolina had not had this much education. In the same year the median amount of formal education for the adult population in Minnesota was 8.5 years, as opposed to only 6.7 years in South Carolina. Under such conditions the problem of developing suitable library service for adults is obviously more difficult in South Carolina.

Economic ability.--The contrast in the economic ability of the two states is equally striking. Annual income, as one economic index, will serve to characterize the difference. Minnesota's gross income payments during 1940 totaled \$1,473,000,000, or almost three times the amount reported for South Carolina.⁴ In that year, when the per capita income for the nation was \$573, Minnesota's was \$526 and South Carolina's was only \$281. It would appear, therefore, that with approximately the same degree of effort Minnesota could apply twice as much financial support to the development of library service as South Carolina.

The county as a unit for library service.--It was pointed out in chapter vi that by employing modern methods of transportation a single library system can serve an area of from 2,000 to 5,000 square miles from a central headquarters. For the most efficient service such an area should have a population of from 40,000 to 50,000 persons.⁵ Its headquarters library should be

⁴U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, August, 1941.

⁵Helen Gordon Stewart, "Advantages and Difficulties in

located in the natural trading center for the region and should have a basic book collection of 20,000 volumes.⁶ Finally, it should receive from \$15,000 to \$25,000 annual support from the entire area.⁷

Chapter vi revealed that most of the counties of South Carolina are too small and too poor to constitute efficient units for independent area-wide library service. How well do Minnesota's counties meet the requirements of such a unit, in area, population, economic ability, and available library collections?

As in the case of South Carolina, most of Minnesota's 87 counties appear to be too small for the most efficient administration of public services. (See Fig. 27.) Eight counties in Minnesota have areas of more than 2,000 square miles, but only two of these have as many as 50,000 inhabitants, since they are located in the sparsely populated cut-over region of the state. Almost one-fourth of the state's counties occupy less than 500 square miles, while over three-fourths contain less than 1,000 square miles. The majority of these small counties lie in the rich agricultural section of the state, where by combining into larger units they could all easily maintain strong area-wide library service.

According to Figure 27, which shows population by counties, 61, or more than two-thirds of Minnesota's counties, have fewer than 25,000 inhabitants--a fact which also suggests the need for larger units for the most efficient organization of rural library service.

Thirty-two, or more than one-third of Minnesota's counties are completely rural (that is, they have no towns with 2,500 inhabitants). Most of these counties would probably receive better library service by contracting with their nearest trade center than by attempting to maintain independent county systems. Only 11 counties are as much as 50 per cent urban, and only 14 have cities of 10,000 or more inhabitants.

the Administration of a Regional Library Unit," Bulletin of the American Library Association, XXVIII (September, 1934), 606.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Louis R. Wilson, The Geography of Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), p. 83.

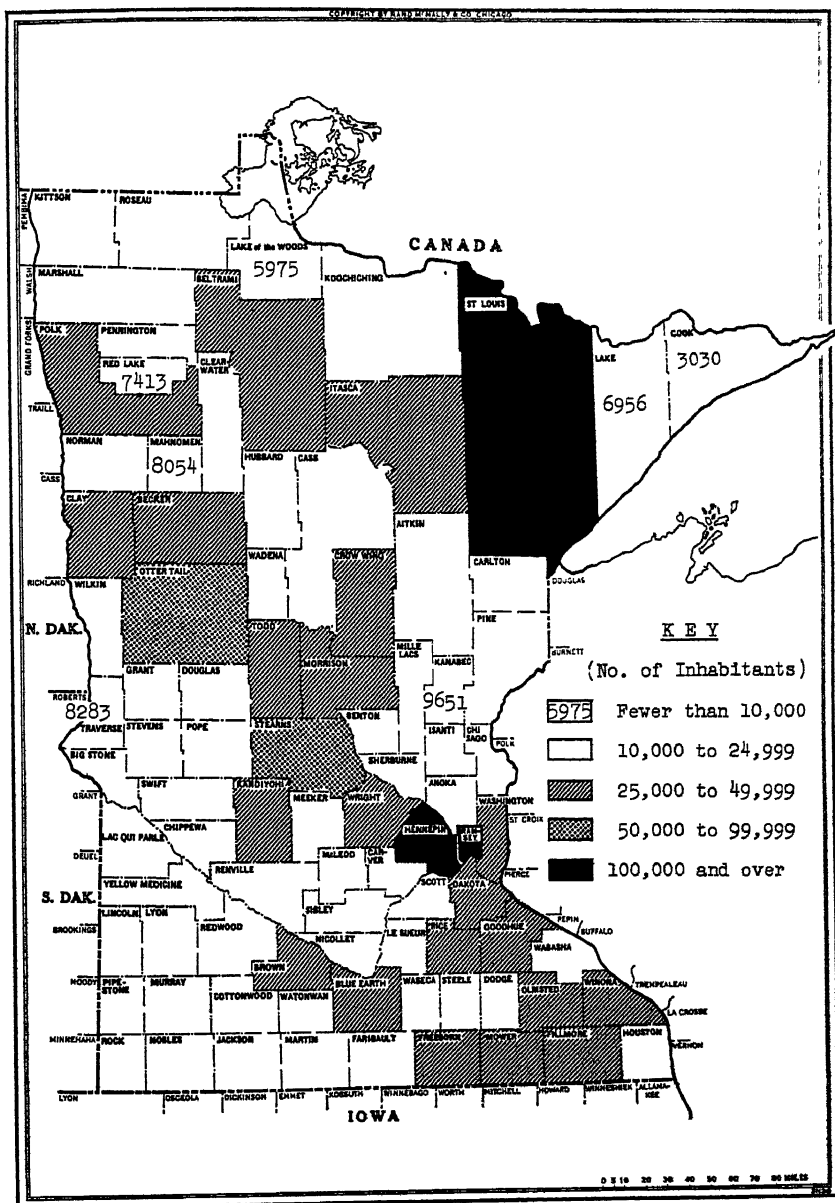


Fig. 27.--Population of Minnesota in 1940, by counties*

*Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942).

This study has cited \$15,000 as a minimum requisite for the annual support of a county or regional library. According to Figure 28, which shows assessed county valuations in Minnesota, only 11 out of 87 counties could raise this amount for county library service under the state's 1-mill permissive library tax limit. More than two-thirds of the counties could not even raise \$10,000 under the present law. In terms of support also, therefore, regional co-operation is indicated for the development of strong county library service in Minnesota. Figure 28 depicts remarkably well the geographical pattern of prosperity throughout the state. The northeast section, except for the iron range country, is characteristically poor, while the southern part of the state is consistently more prosperous.

If 20,000 volumes is used as a minimum quantitative standard for a county library collection, only 12, or less than one-seventh, of the counties in the state could meet this requirement with an existing local public library.

In summary, it may be said of Minnesota as of South Carolina that in general its counties are too small to constitute efficient units for the organization of area-wide library service. Moreover, few of the state's 87 counties have either the natural trade centers or the initial book stock required to provide optimum conditions for the operation of an independent county library. It is true that many more counties in Minnesota than in South Carolina could support nominal library service alone. However, in both states some regional co-operation will be necessary before adequate service is universally available.

Library service in Minnesota.—This section discusses established library facilities in Minnesota in 1939-1940. Since the published library statistics⁸ do not include WPA-assisted service, the data for this year are used because they are more reliable and complete than for 1937 or 1938. In terms of library coverage and needs, therefore, they represent the conditions existing when the WPA state-wide project was organized late in 1938.

At that time there were 145 public libraries in the state, compared with 30 in South Carolina before the WPA, and 49 libraries maintained by subscription or association funds. Figure 29

⁸Minnesota Libraries, XIII (March, 1941), "Public Library Statistics."

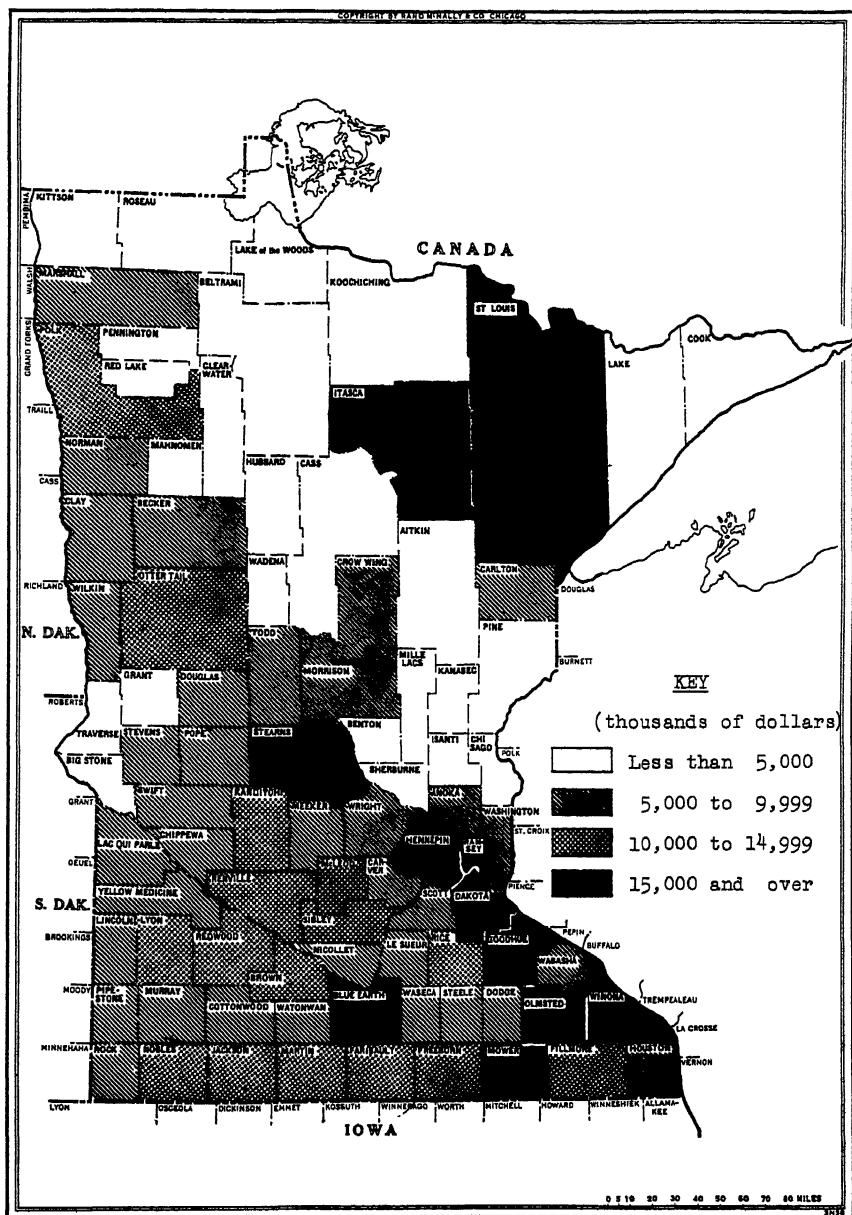


Fig. 28.--Assessed valuation in Minnesota in 1938; by counties*

*Source: Minnesota Tax Commission, Sixteenth Biennial Report (Saint Paul, Minnesota, 1938).

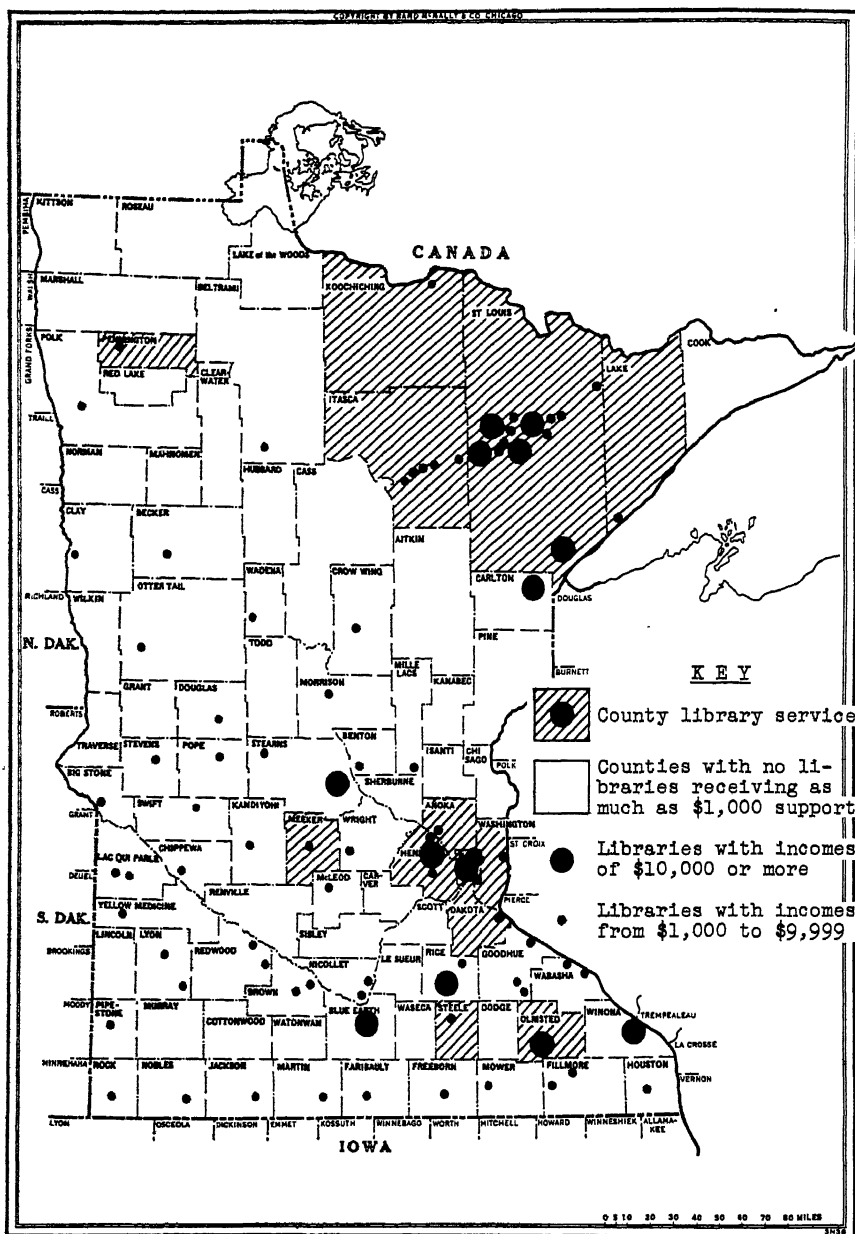


Fig. 29.--Public library service in Minnesota, 1939-40*

*Source: Minnesota Libraries, XIII (March, 1941), 135-143.

shows the location of the 87 public libraries with at least \$1,000 annual support, and designates the 13 counties receiving some form of "county service" from established local libraries. It also locates the 13 libraries with incomes exceeding \$10,000 a year. According to this map, over one-third of the 87 counties had no public libraries with as much as \$1,000 annual support, while only 8 had libraries with incomes as high as \$10,000.

Characteristically, public library service in Minnesota is a local community function. Thus, except in the larger cities, Minnesota's public libraries tend to be too small, inadequately supported, and poorly staffed to render a high standard of service. For example, only 34, or fewer than one-fourth of the state's 145 tax-supported public libraries, have annual incomes of \$4,000, the minimum amount generally considered necessary to maintain an independent library regardless of the size of the community to be served.⁹ Similarly, less than one-fourth of these 145 public libraries have book collections of 10,000 volumes or more. In short, as in the case of the county as a unit of rural government, Minnesota's public libraries are too numerous and too small to be fully effective. Furthermore, their distribution throughout the state leaves many sections with no service whatever, while others have library facilities in abundance.

In 1939-40 the state as a whole spent approximately \$1,350,000 in support of public libraries, in contrast to less than \$170,000 spent in South Carolina in 1932. Its per capita library support that year was \$.48, as opposed to \$.10 in South Carolina. Its book collections totaled more than 2,800,000 volumes, against less than 300,000 in South Carolina. And its circulation of public library books was over 11,500,000 volumes, while South Carolina's was barely 1,000,000.

More than 40 per cent of the inhabitants of Minnesota were without any local publicly supported library service whatever in 1940. Almost all of the state's urban communities had some degree of service, but 83 per cent of its rural population still had only such service as it could obtain by mail from the state library agency. Twelve counties, with a total population of nearly 150,000, had no legally established public libraries within

⁹Ethel M. Fair, "A Unit for Library Service," Wisconsin Library Bulletin, XXI (1925), 172-74.

their borders. Only 2 of the 13 counties with "county library service" were receiving as much as \$5,000 from the county, and only 4 were rendering effective extension service. The public library situation in Minnesota, therefore, while apparently much better than that in South Carolina, presents a problem in the re-organization and extension of facilities and support quite as difficult of solution as that in South Carolina, if equal, adequate library service is ever to be achieved throughout the entire state.

School and college libraries are not an immediate concern of this chapter, since the Minnesota state-wide WPA project included only public library service in its demonstration program. It should be noted, however, in discussing library facilities in Minnesota, that school library development is stimulated by state aid, by the compulsory certification of teacher-librarians, and by constant direct advice, service, and assistance from the school section of the Library Division. The state has 6 junior college libraries, 6 teachers college libraries, 13 college libraries, and one of the largest university library collections in the United States.

The state library agency.—Unlike South Carolina, Minnesota has a state library agency, the Library Division of the State Department of Education, which renders extensive service to libraries and to the development of library service throughout the state. Its functions, as stated by law, are:

1. To aid established libraries through advisory service, field visits, and correspondence.
2. To assist and encourage the formation of libraries where none exist.
3. To maintain and circulate traveling libraries for the benefit of libraries and rural residents of the state.
4. To exercise general supervision over school libraries, the maintenance of standards of service, certification of school librarians, and the administration of school laws and regulations.¹⁰

This agency, with a budget of from \$26,000 to \$28,000, has a staff of 9 persons (5 professional, 4 clerical) and a book collection of approximately 40,000 volumes. In 1939-40 it loaned

¹⁰ Minnesota Department of Education, Library Division, "Annual Report: 1938-39," 12 pp. (Typewritten.)

a total of 82,000 volumes (28,000 as individual loans and 54,000 in package or traveling libraries).

In addition to the extensive advisory assistance which this agency renders to individual libraries by field visits and correspondence, it publishes and distributes free of charge a quarterly bulletin, Minnesota Libraries, which contains articles on current library practice, news of Minnesota libraries, annual statistics on library service in Minnesota, and selected notes on new publications of interest to librarians.¹¹

From the point of view of this study, one of the most important functions of the Library Division in Minnesota is its activity in the field of state-wide library planning. Prior to the establishment of the Minnesota state-wide WPA library project, the Library Division had surveyed the conditions of library service and support in every county in the state and had formulated a long-range plan for library development.¹² This plan and the survey upon which it was based made it possible for the state-wide project to begin effective operation with little loss of time as soon as its establishment was authorized. From the point of view of project administration, therefore, Minnesota was fortunate in having a state agency which could provide leadership, direction, and a plan for the effective use of WPA assistance when it became available.

The State-wide WPA Library Project: Its Organization and Administration

From 1935 to 1938 the WPA had rendered assistance to public libraries in Minnesota by establishing individual, locally-sponsored projects for the expansion of existing services and the repair of library books and magazines. Late in 1938, however, a state-wide library project was organized to supersede these numerous local projects, in accord with the new policy of WPA library assistance formulated by the Library Service Section in Washington.

¹¹This bulletin is acknowledged to be one of the best issued by any state library agency.

¹²"Library Objectives for Minnesota," Minnesota State Department of Education, Library Notes and News, XI (October-December, 1935), 130.

Objectives and organization.--The stated objectives of the Minnesota state-wide library project were: "to expand existing library services, to bring books to areas without them, and to show the economy and practicability of library service organized on county and regional lines by operating area-wide library demonstrations in selected groups of unserved counties."¹³ These objectives naturally divided the activities of the project into two phases: (1) assistance to existing libraries, and (2) extension of library service to new areas. The former activity involved merely the provision of clerical workers so that established libraries could expand their normal services. It is the latter, or library demonstration phase of the project, with which this study is primarily concerned.

The administrative organization of the Minnesota state-wide project followed the general pattern described in chapter v and illustrated by the South Carolina project in chapter vi. It differed from the latter, however, in three important respects. Since the Library Division, as the official state library agency, was able to assume responsibility for planning and directing the demonstration program, it became the official sponsor of the project and, within the limitations affecting all WPA activities, largely determined the policies governing its operation. In the second place, because of local circumstances in the WPA state office, the responsibility for the project was divided on a functional basis. The State Supervisor was administratively responsible for the entire project, and was in immediate charge of assistance to established libraries, book repair, and all project records and reports. The Assistant State Supervisor, on the other hand, was technically responsible for the conduct of the extension or demonstration aspect of the program. Finally, since project assistance in Minnesota was intensive rather than extensive, it concentrated its demonstrations largely in one WPA district; therefore it was not necessary to maintain a large corps of supervisors throughout the state, as in the case of South Carolina.

The WPA personnel of the Minnesota state-wide library project included the State Supervisor, the Assistant State Super-

¹³Minnesota Department of Education, Library Division, Minnesota Library Notes and News, XII (December, 1938), 239.

visor, a supervisor in charge of public relations, one in charge of book preparation (classification and cataloging), five field supervisors in charge of specific county-wide library service demonstrations, and the scores of relief workers needed to process, mend, and distribute books, and to staff individual lending stations. The Director of the Library Division (the state library agency) also served as technical adviser to the project, and its Librarian served as book selector for the entire demonstration program.

In addition to this personal assistance, the Library Division furnished office space, shipping materials, transportation costs and the use of its bibliographic tools. It also contributed approximately 9,000 volumes from its traveling library collection and purchased hundreds of new books with its own funds for use in county demonstrations. Local libraries serving as centers for county library demonstrations provided space, heat, light, and some books for the project; and citizens' organizations furnished quarters, shelving, and such contributions of cash and books as they could raise to supplement the resources available for individual county demonstrations. Finally, the WPA furnished workers, supervisors, and limited funds for new books.

Noteworthy characteristics of the Minnesota project.--

Several characteristics of this state-wide library project are worthy of special mention. The outstanding feature of the entire project was its use of publicity.¹⁴ Within each demonstration county project supervisors appeared before chambers of commerce, service clubs, and other interested groups to explain the objectives of the program and to obtain support for the library tax levy. They helped various organizations plan amateur theatricals, pancake suppers, auctions, moving picture programs, luncheons, and ice cream socials for the benefit of the county library movement. Some of them prepared exhibits for county fairs and developed rotating collections of posters for use at individual lending stations.

The unusual feature of Minnesota's public relations program, however, was its arrangement for the centralized prepara-

¹⁴ Reports on this aspect of the project appear in Minnesota Libraries, XII (December, 1939), 395-97, and XIII (December, 1941), 245-46.

tion and distribution of project news and information. Because the sponsor of the project realized that an intensive and well directed educational campaign was essential to the fulfillment of the demonstration program's objectives, planned publicity was an important factor in project operation from the beginning. A publicity expert, with training and experience in newspaper work rather than in librarianship, was engaged to handle this promotional aspect of the program at the headquarters office. When the project got under way this staff member, who had an unusually sensitive "nose for news," supplied weekly localized releases to every newspaper in demonstration counties, wrote special articles on the project for farm and association journals, and prepared numerous leaflets in quantities for local distribution, graphically depicting library conditions in individual counties, and explaining clearly and simply the benefits, cost, and method of establishing permanent county-wide library service. By May, 1941 more than 500 news releases had been devoted to project publicity in demonstration counties, and many special articles had been sent to the 500 daily and weekly papers in the state.

Eight different series of weekly radio scripts--ranging from interviews with local civic leaders to spot announcements and dramatic sketches--and numerous sample talks for the use of lay supporters of the county library movement were prepared by the project's publicity supervisor. An attractive and colorful poster was designed to mark the location of individual deposit collections and was displayed prominently at every lending station. (See Figs. 36, 38, and 39.) Finally, an informal mimeographed bulletin, "The Library Demonstrator," containing up-to-the-minute news of demonstration progress in individual counties, was issued monthly at the sponsor's expense to members of citizen's library associations and selected individuals interested in state-wide library development. No other project has made such effective use of centralized publicity, according to the Director of the WPA Library Service Section.

Other characteristics of the Minnesota project worthy of special mention are its policy of concentrating WPA demonstration assistance in a few counties, its preference for branch and station service to bookmobile service, its centralized selection and processing of project books, and its special request service.

The plan of concentrating WPA demonstration assistance

in a few counties was adopted because the Library Division believed that library development in Minnesota would be furthered more by the operation of a limited number of strong, well-supervised, successful demonstrations than by dispersing the available aid thinly throughout the entire state. By beginning with the most favorable unserved areas, it hoped to obtain results quickly and then to undertake demonstrations in less-favored sections, where the experience gained in the first group of counties would facilitate the achievement of the program's objectives.

In contrast to South Carolina, Minnesota used no bookmobiles in its WPA-assisted library service demonstrations. The sponsor believed that since the counties were small and well covered with small villages and towns, better service would be rendered by concentrating project funds on the provision of good book collections in convenient, daily accessible branches and stations, than by investing in expensive mobile equipment which would make books available to individual borrowers only on bi-weekly visits. This project, therefore, restricted its service to the maintenance of carefully selected rotating deposits of from 50 to 300 volumes in the principal communities in each county, using as library lending depots such diverse centers of congregation as general stores, town halls, post offices, book shops, drug stores, and filling stations.

Actually, of course, bookmobiles and deposit stations are by no means mutually exclusive. It is quite possible that this project might have done well to experiment with the use of at least one such mobile unit in conjunction with its lending stations in two or three adjoining counties. This arrangement would have given the project the publicity value which such a unit contributes. It would have won increased support for permanent service among rural readers living in areas not located near any branch or station. And, finally, it might have served to further the objective of inter-county or regional co-operation in permanent library organization.

Centralized selection and processing of demonstration book collections was an important administrative feature of Minnesota's state-wide library project. This arrangement, as described by the Librarian of the Library Division,¹⁵ is by no means unique

¹⁵Eleanor Davis, "Selecting Books for WPA Library Demonstrations," Minnesota Libraries, XII (December, 1939), 393-94.

in Minnesota but was so well organized and administered in this state that it deserves special mention. Unusual care was exercised in selecting materials adapted to the reading abilities and interests of this project's particular clientele, whose reading had previously been restricted largely to newspapers and farm journals. The distribution of books to individual counties and the catalog records for locating individual titles were also well organized, with the result that special requests could be filled promptly if the materials were available in any of the project's collections.

Finally, special request service, also an important feature of good decentralized library systems, was emphasized by the Minnesota demonstration program. Request forms were available at each lending station, and, when filled out, were forwarded to the project headquarters by the local supervisor if the material could not be supplied from within the county. Titles not held by the project itself were obtained from the library of the state agency, or, in the case of important items, were supplied through interlibrary loan from libraries in Minneapolis or St. Paul. During 1940 alone almost 600 individual requests were handled for the 6 counties in which library demonstrations were operating. Except for numerous duplicate requests for current best-sellers, such as Grapes of Wrath, Kitty Foyle, Gone with the Wind, and For Whom the Bell Tolls, most of these requests represented a serious desire to read definite titles or to study specific subjects. Among the books thus requested were With Lawrence in Arabia, Old Peruvian Art, Mein Kampf, Fresh Water Biology, Journalistic Vocations, Victor Book of the Symphony, Return to Religion, Modern Radio Servicing, Strategy in Handling People, Marriage and the Family, Interior Decorating, Inside Asia, and Homecraft Rugs.

The Development, Scope, and Achievement of the State-wide Library Project

This section discusses the development of the Minnesota WPA library project up to May 1, 1942, when its activities were redirected to become a part of the WPA's War Information Service program.

Chronology of the county library demonstration program.--
The Minnesota state-wide library project was formally begun in October, 1938. In accord with the sponsor's policy of concentrat-

ing project assistance in a few selected areas at a time, the following several months were spent in inaugurating rural library demonstrations in a group of 6 adjoining counties in the southern part of the state. These counties (see Fig. 30) were: Blue Earth, Waseca, Rice, Goodhue, Freeborn, and Mower. Since a number of weeks were required to assemble, catalog, and distribute books for demonstration use, to organize co-sponsoring groups for participation in each county, to arrange quarters for branches and deposits, and to assign local station attendants, the service did not actually begin until January, 1939.

During the spring of 1939 the service in individual counties expanded rapidly, so that by July over 16,000 volumes had been loaned to over 3,000 registered borrowers at 41 different lending stations. At that time 384 relief workers were employed on the state-wide project, including auxiliary workers in established libraries and those assigned to book repair units throughout the state. Project book collections then totaled over 18,000 volumes, including 6,866 purchased with WPA funds and almost 11,000 supplied by the sponsor. The entire circulation from these 6 demonstrations at the end of their first year was approximately 86,000 volumes, or an average of 11,000 a month.

By the beginning of 1940 the number of lending stations for the entire project had increased to 80, and in April the program was employing more than 700 persons. On the first of June the circulation of books in the 6 initial demonstrations during the previous 12 months totaled 107,696 volumes. By the end of the year these demonstrations had registered over 13,500 borrowers, and had circulated a total of over 200,000 volumes.

December, 1940, marked the end of the first phase of the library demonstration program in Minnesota. At that time the project had been in operation almost 2 years; and 3 of the first 6 demonstrations, having served their purpose, were brought to a conclusion (see Fig. 31). Accordingly, as fast as the facilities in these counties were withdrawn, they were redistributed to bring their benefits to an entirely new group of unserved areas. By the beginning of 1941, when the second phase of the program got under way, 6 new demonstrations were started in as many different counties.¹⁶ (See Figs. 30 and 31.) In May of that year,

¹⁶Stearns, Lyon, Martin, Nobles, Redwood, and Watonwan.

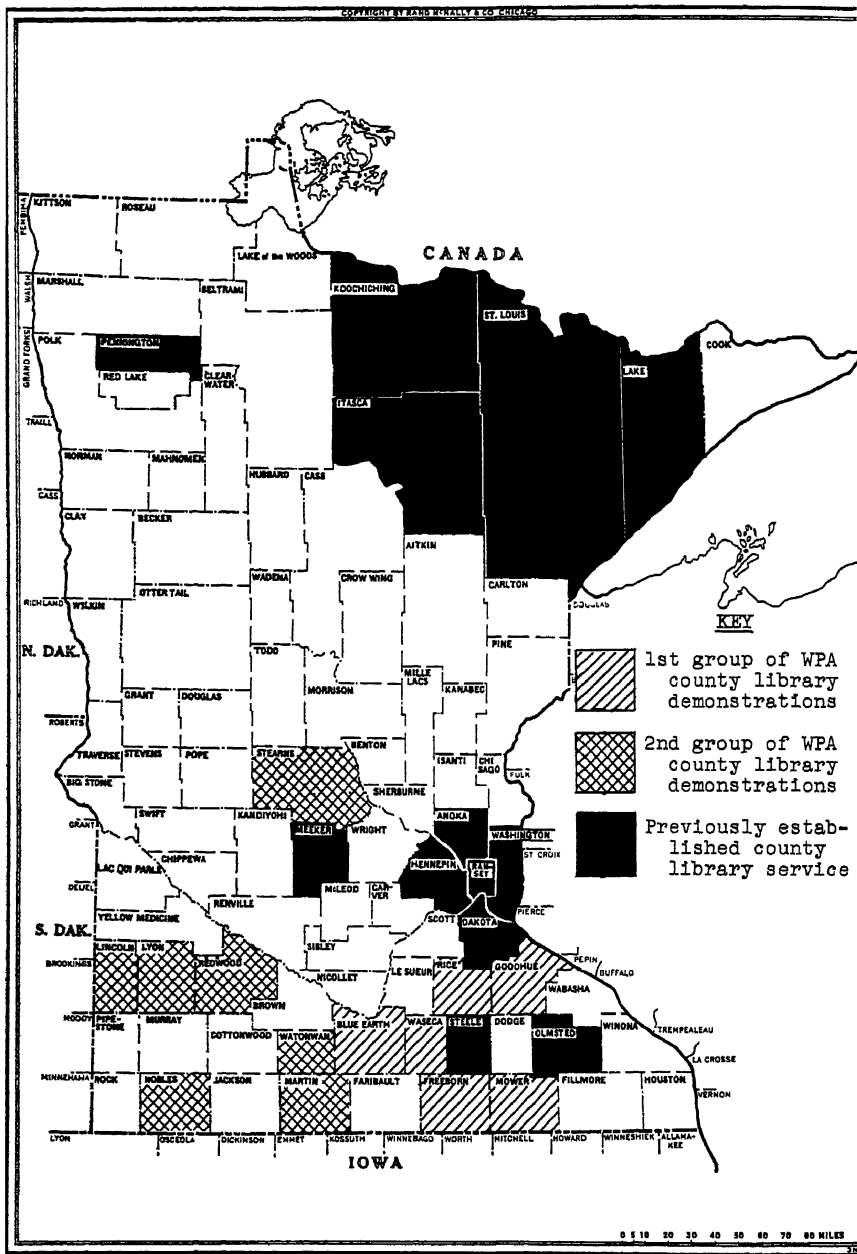


Fig. 30.--County library service in Minnesota, 1939-1941, including WPA demonstrations and previously established service.

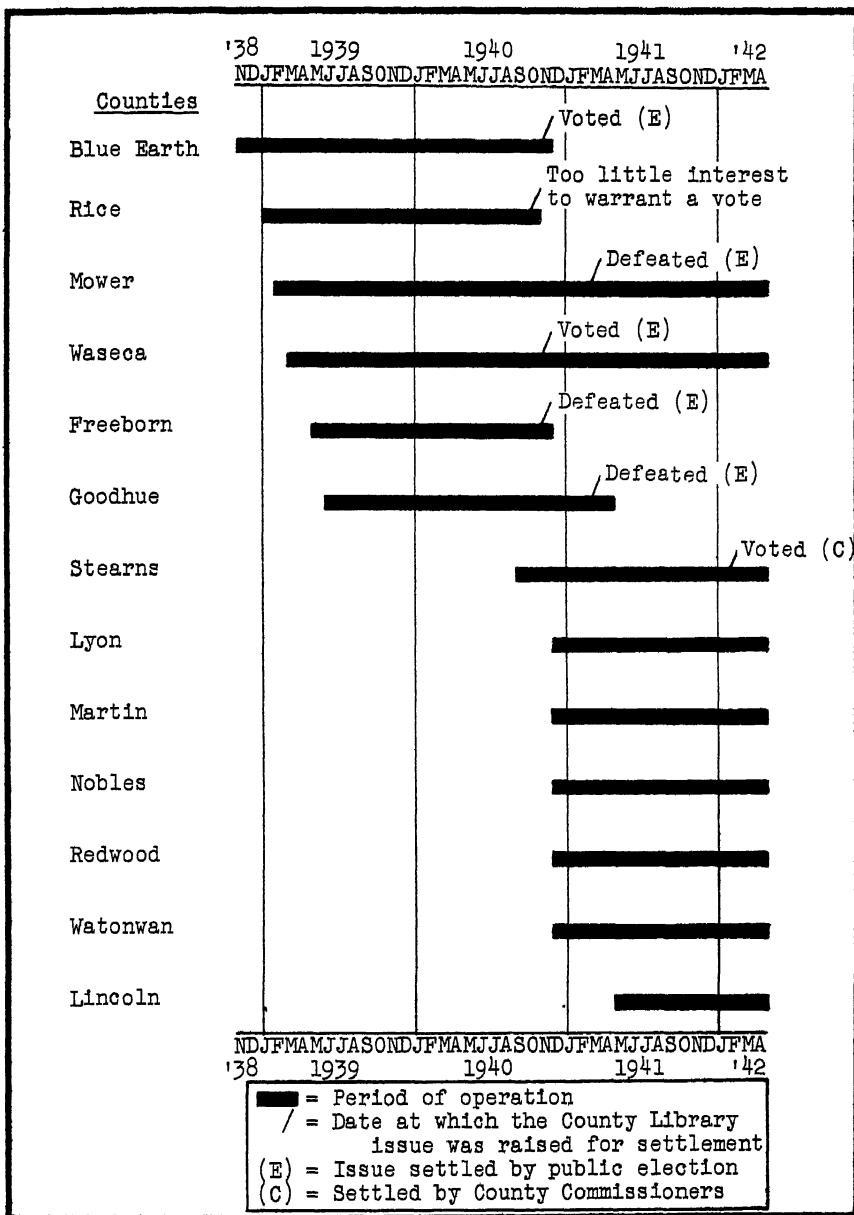


Fig. 31.--Chronology of WPA-assisted county library demonstrations in Minnesota, 1938-1942.

when another of the original demonstrations was discontinued, an additional one was begun in Lincoln county, making a total of 13 counties to benefit from the program up to that time. During 1941 demonstrations were being operated in 9 counties, including 2, Mower and Waseca, of the original group of 6. (See Fig. 31.)

By May, 1942, the results of the demonstration program, briefly summarized, were as follows: Three of the first 7 counties to receive this project assistance had authorized tax support for permanent county library service. One had defeated the measure by a narrow margin. Two had tentatively defeated the issue when sentiment was tested by a straw vote at township elections. When the program was superseded by the state-wide War Information Service project none of the last 6 demonstrations had been in operation as long as a year and a half; therefore, the issue of permanent tax support had not yet been raised for formal settlement.

At the end of its third year (December, 1941) the Minnesota state-wide project was able to report the following achievements of its "assistance to established libraries" phase:

1. Assistance (of various kinds) had been rendered to 140 public libraries and 101 public school libraries throughout the state.
2. Two established county libraries had used WPA attendants in 11 lending stations.
3. Fifty-five small public and school libraries had been kept open by WPA workers.
4. Over 1,000,000 books had been renovated for public and school libraries.
5. Assistance had been given in cataloging over 150,000 public and school library books.¹⁷

Conditions and results in the first six demonstrations.--

This section considers the experience of Minnesota's library demonstration program in the first group of counties to receive its benefits. First the counties are characterized as a group, then individually. The 6 thus treated are: Blue Earth, Rice, Mower, Waseca, Freeborn, and Goodhue.

All 6 counties are located in the prosperous farming re-

¹⁷From a report in Minnesota Libraries, XIII (December, 1941), 243, and earlier typewritten project reports.

gion in the southern part of the state. (See Fig. 30.) They range in size from 415 to 758 square miles. With the exception of Waseca, which has only 15,000 inhabitants, they have populations of from 31,500 to over 36,000. Their density of population ranges from 36.6 to 65 persons per square mile, and their populations are from 28 to nearly 60 per cent urban. All except Waseca have a city of 10,000 or more inhabitants and assessed tax valuations of over \$12,500,000. Four of the 6 counties had a local public library with more than 17,000 volumes and total public library collections of over 25,000 volumes when the project began. In 3 of them over 50 per cent of the inhabitants were already served by these local public libraries. All except Waseca had at least one bookstore within their borders. On the whole, therefore--except for their relatively small size--5 out of these 6 counties may be considered as sound units for the development of county libraries.

The locations of the WPA demonstration headquarters, existing local libraries, and lending branches and stations in each county are shown in Figure 32. These agencies include 14 public libraries and 78 demonstration outlets. The trend of book circulation for each demonstration during 1939 and 1940 is indicated in Figure 33. It should be noted that these graphs do not include circulation figures for established local libraries and therefore represent only the number of volumes circulated from demonstration lending stations and not the total use of library books in these counties.

The first of the demonstrations to begin operation was the one in Blue Earth County (see Fig. 32). This county has over 36,000 inhabitants, of whom 15,000 live in Mankato, the county seat, which has a public library of almost 30,000 volumes. When the first station was opened in January, 1939, there were also two other small public libraries in the county. Nevertheless, half of the total population was still without library service at the time. From the beginning the demonstration had the full co-operation of the Mankato Public Library, which served as headquarters for the undertaking. In quick succession 10 stations were established, book collections totaling 2,350 volumes were deposited in various parts of the county, and a regular monthly circulation of from 2,000 to 2,600 volumes a month was soon developed. (See Fig. 33.) These stations were located in general

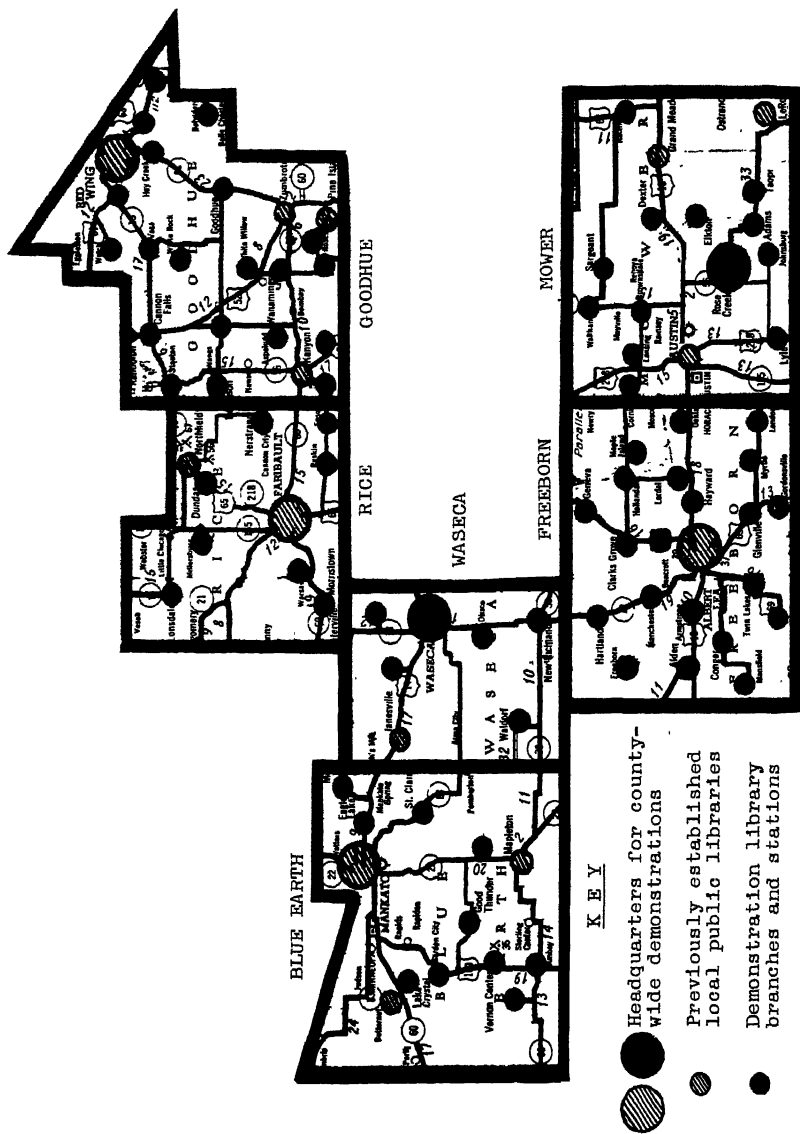


Fig. 32.--WPA-assisted county library demonstrations in Minnesota during 1939 and 1940.

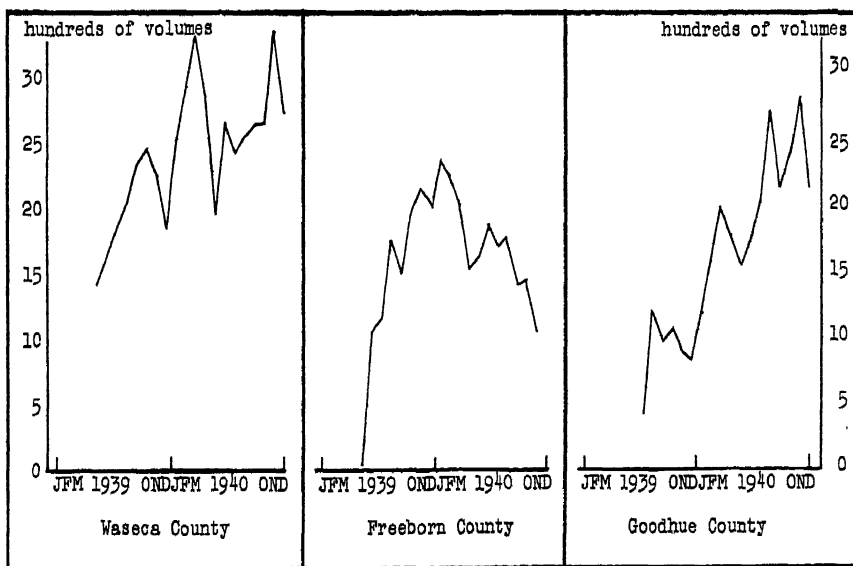
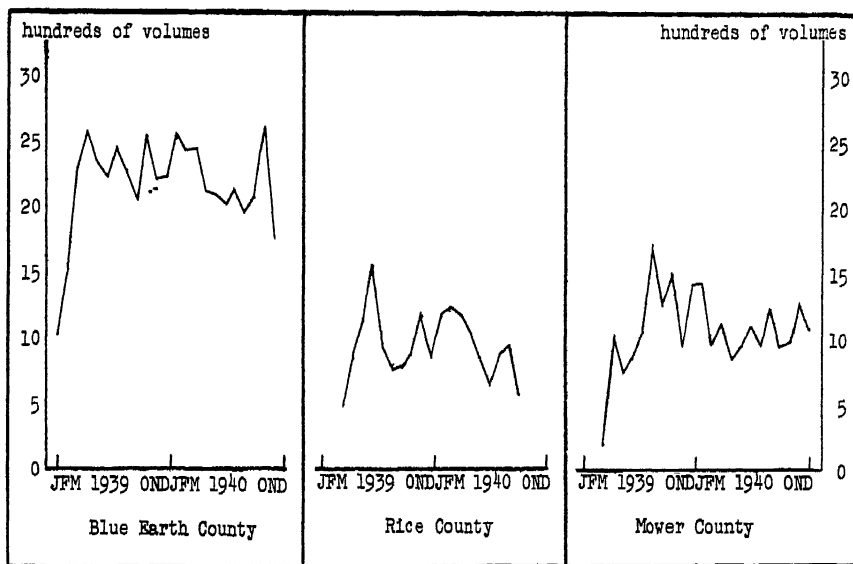


Fig. 33.--Circulation trends in WPA-assisted county library demonstrations in Minnesota during 1939 and 1940.

stores (see Fig. 34), a post office, a bus depot, a filling station, and a school building.



Fig. 34.--Selecting books from a general store deposit station in Minnesota.

After the demonstration had been in operation only six months a County Library Committee, consisting of interested citizens representing eight different communities and various civic organizations, study clubs, and farm bureau groups, approached the County Commissioners to ask that a county library be established. It was then agreed to put the question to the citizens at a regular election. After a program of publicity, in which the local newspapers, the radio, and an exhibit at the county fair played a part, the issue was presented at the November, 1940, election; and a vote of 6,915 to 5,206 was cast in favor of levying a 1-mill tax for permanent service by contract from the Mankato Public Library. The funds thus raised amount to almost \$14,000 a year.

In Rice County, where the second demonstration opened, the outcome was quite different. In Blue Earth County, a large proportion of the population were rural residents, who would benefit from county library service. In Rice County, on the other

hand, almost 60 per cent of the population reside in the cities of Faribault and Northfield, which have long had public libraries of their own. (See Fig. 32.) In this situation, therefore, although individual groups of readers in small communities throughout the county earnestly desired library service, their vote alone could scarcely bring about its establishment. With a single exception (see Fig. 33), the demonstration never circulated more than 1,250 books a month. Accordingly, in November, 1940, after more than 20 months of assistance, it was decided to withdraw the demonstration when it became evident that its chance for success at a county-wide election was exceedingly slight.

Mower County was the third to inaugurate a county library demonstration. Here, as in Rice county, more than half of the population was urban. Austin, the county seat, a city of 18,000, has its own library; and there are two public libraries at the opposite end of the county (see Fig. 32). Unfortunately, the Austin Public Library did not wish to participate in the demonstration; so headquarters were established at Rose Creek, a small village nearer the center of the county. A citizen's county library association worked actively in behalf of permanent service. The Austin Herald, the county's most influential newspaper, the Austin Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the local radio station all gave their support. The WPA established 13 lending stations with a total of almost 2,800 volumes in various outlying communities (see the barber shop station at Sargeant, Fig. 35). Nevertheless, without the co-operation of the public library and the Board of County Commissioners, the undertaking was defeated when it was presented for a straw vote at the March, 1941, township election. Owing to the enthusiasm and determination of the county library association to carry on their efforts to obtain permanent tax support, it was decided to continue the demonstration for another trial period. It was still in operation, therefore, when the project was terminated in May, 1942.

Waseca, the fourth county to have a county library demonstration, deserves special mention. It is the smallest and poorest of all six counties, and ordinarily would not have been selected as one of the first demonstration counties. Its total population is only 15,000. Its county seat, the city of Waseca, has only 4,270 inhabitants. The remaining 72 per cent of its population is entirely rural. The only public library was a small

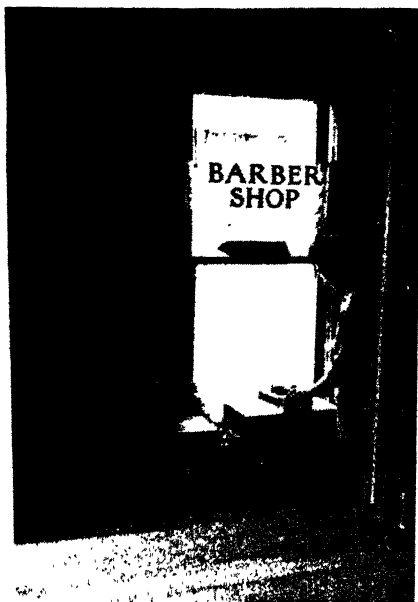


Fig. 35.--Books in a barber shop in Sargeant (Mower County), Minnesota.

collection in Janesville, a village of 1,300 located near the western border of the county. Thus, both the city of Waseca and the rest of the county stood to gain from a permanent county library. In March, 1939, in response to an organized request for assistance, a demonstration was started, with headquarters in Waseca. A book collection of 2,600 volumes was distributed among 6 lending stations located in various stores and public buildings (see Fig. 36) throughout the county. A citizen's library association and numerous local organizations conducted an intensive campaign for permanent county service. The use of demonstration books was consistently greater here than in any of the 5 other counties (see Fig. 33), because of a large circulation in the city of Waseca.



Fig. 36.--A town hall library lending station

Since county service in Minnesota must be obtained by contract with an existing local library, if there is one in the county, a public library was established in the city of Waseca by a 2 to 1 vote in April, 1940, at the end of the demonstration's first year of operation. Seven months later, at the regular fall election, the entire county voted to contract with this library for permanent service. Again the vote was almost 2 to 1 in favor of the issue. In order to prevent interruption of the service, it was decided to continue WPA assistance until the first tax funds became available.

Of the first six areas to inaugurate rural library demonstrations, Freeborn County would seem to present an unusually favorable situation for a county library program. It occupies a rectangular area 24 by 30 miles, and has a total population of 31,780. Albert Lea, the county seat, is a city of over 12,000 inhabitants, and lies near the center of the county. From this focal point good roads radiate to more than 20 towns and villages. The county is almost 62 per cent rural; and since its only library is one of 8,000 volumes, which serves the city of Albert Lea, it had almost 20,000 persons (or more than any of the other 5 coun-

ties) without library service in May, 1939, when the demonstration was begun. A headquarters was established at the Albert Lea Public Library, and 21 lending stations, with a total of 4,589 volumes, were established in outlying communities. (See Fig. 32.) Thus this county had more station outlets and many more books than any other demonstration county. Local deposits were housed in stores (see Fig. 37), barber shops, schools, homes, a cafe (see Fig. 38), and an unused jail.

The use of the demonstration service in this county increased rapidly during its first nine months of operation. (See Fig. 33.) Unfortunately, a county library association was not formally organized until the service had been operating nine months. In July, 1940, this group petitioned the County Commissioners to establish county service by contract, but its request was refused. At that time the leading newspaper in the county came out strongly against the proposal, and the use of the service declined sharply. When the issue came to a vote, in November, 1940, sufficient opposition had been marshalled to defeat it 6,971 to 5,647. This vote was unusually heavy, and hence was taken to represent the will of the entire county; so the demonstration, having served its purpose, was immediately discontinued.

Goodhue was the last of the first group of counties to start a rural library demonstration. It is the largest of the six, and almost 70 per cent of its population is rural. However, it already had 4 public libraries within its borders; therefore, nominally only 45 per cent of its inhabitants were completely without some degree of local library service. Its greatest drawback as a library unit is the fact that the county seat, Red Wing, is located in a remote corner of the county area (see Fig. 32), thus rendering the close supervision and servicing of the entire county somewhat difficult. In this county 20 lending stations were established, in general stores, an electric shop, a jeweler's (see Fig. 39), a cheese factory, and a municipal pump house (see Fig. 40). The use of the service increased from approximately 1,200 volumes in its second month to almost 3,000 a month one year later. At that time the book stock totaled 2,800 volumes.

In March, 1941, this county tested public sentiment on the question of a permanent library tax by taking a straw vote at a township election. However, because the issue was not up for



Fig. 37.—A library deposit at the Lars Kvale store in Myrtle (Freeborn County) .



Fig. 38.—A demonstration deposit in a road-side café.

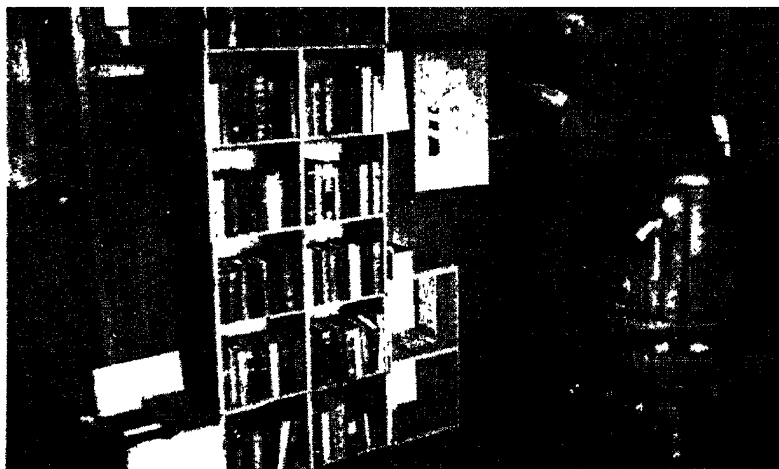


Fig. 39.--Orange-crate shelving in a jeweler's shop

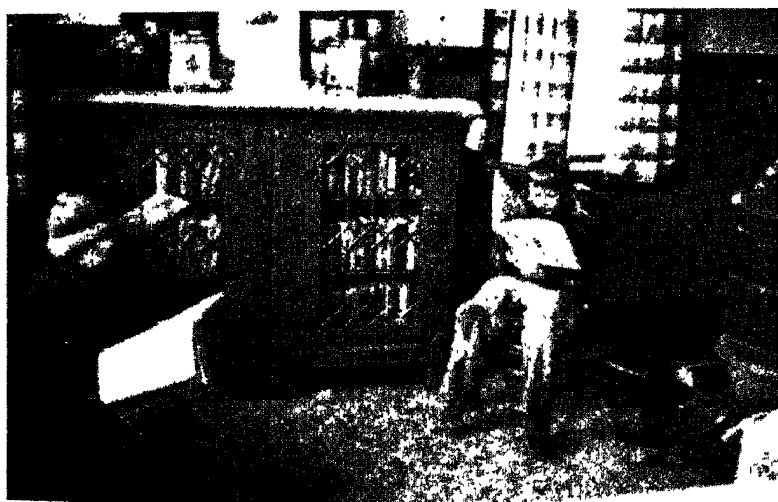


Fig. 40.--A lending station in a reconditioned village pump house.

official settlement, many supporters of the library movement failed to go to the polls, and the total vote was very light (only 1,062 out of over 16,000 eligible voters). When it was discovered that less than 200 ballots had been cast in favor of establishing county library service, it was decided to withdraw the project's facilities for use in the second group of counties, which were just starting their demonstrations at that time.

Demonstration Service Compared with Established County Library Service

When Minnesota's state-wide WPA library project was organized, 13 of the state's 87 counties had library service by contract from established public libraries (see Fig. 30). This study now considers the differences between the type of service developed by the demonstration program and that of these previously established "county library" systems.

The character of the service provided in all of the demonstration counties is essentially uniform. The 13 established county systems, on the other hand, vary so greatly that no single pattern can be used to describe them as a group. For this reason, and because statistics of the county demonstrations and of county contract service are not directly comparable, no generalized comparisons, based on expenditures or circulation figures, are attempted. Instead, the basic characteristics of WPA-assisted service are contrasted with those of various county contract systems, and a comparative analysis of a demonstration book collection and that of an established county system is presented.

The pattern of service followed in each of the WPA-assisted demonstrations emphasizes direct, county-wide public library service from a central library, through a system of rotating deposit collections located conveniently in rural centers of population and trade. It is characterized by centralized selection, processing, and distribution of book collections, professional supervision, and a "special request" service, intended to make the entire resources of the project available to the individual reader, wherever he may be. This type of service was provided in 13 different counties in Minnesota through a total of 144 individual lending stations, from 1939 to 1942.

Established county library service, as it existed in Minnesota before the WPA, ranged from fairly complete service to

almost no service at all, depending upon local conditions. Only 4 of the 13 counties with contract service were rendering really effective service to their rural residents.¹⁸ Two of these were the small, adjoining metropolitan counties containing Minneapolis and St. Paul. A third was the county including Duluth and the wealthy cities of the Mesabi iron range. Although only 2 of the 13 contracting libraries were receiving as much as \$5,000 for county service, 9 of them were attempting to provide school as well as public library service. Only 4, including the 3 atypical metropolitan counties, had separate county book collections of over 5,000 volumes. Nine of the 13 were serving more than 150 lending stations and 483 schools. The remaining 4 counties were receiving no extension service whatever. Their residents were permitted to use the contracting library, but had to travel to the county seat to do so. Such extension service as was rendered appears to have centered in rural schools, in most of the 13 counties. Therefore, of all the counties credited with having "county libraries" before the WPA, only 2 or 3 did in fact have actual, area-wide public library service of the type provided by the demonstration program.

Two book collections analyzed.—A qualitative evaluation of one aspect of the service rendered by a library can be undertaken by making various analyses of its book collection. Since the complete lists of holdings of a typical county demonstration and the county collection of a comparable contracting public library were made available to this study, they are analyzed together to show how they differ when tested by the same set of criteria.

In March, 1941, this WPA-assisted county, referred to hereafter as "the Demonstration county," had a book collection of barely 3,000 volumes, which it made available to rural residents through 16 lending stations throughout the county. At that time the county with established contract service, referred to as "the Contract county," had a separate county book collection of almost 6,000 volumes, which it distributed through 18 county library deposit stations.

Table 20 shows the number and per cent of the titles in

¹⁸ This section is based on statistics published annually in Minnesota Libraries.

TABLE 20

ANALYSIS OF TWO COUNTY BOOK COLLECTIONS IN MINNESOTA,
ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER AND PER CENT OF FICTION,
NON-FICTION, ADULT, AND JUVENILE TITLES IN EACH

Item	Demonstration ^a County (3,006 Vols.) (2,477 Titles)		Contract ^b County (5,990 Vols.) (2,168 Titles)	
	No. of Titles	Per Cent	No. of Titles	Per Cent
<u>Adult books</u>				
Number of fiction titles....	935		147	
Per cent of all adult titles		60.1		82.3
Number of non-fiction titles	619		247	
Per cent of all adult titles		39.9		17.7
Total number of adult titles	1,554		1,394	
Per cent of all titles held.		61.9		64.3
<u>Juvenile books</u>				
Number of fiction titles....	467		668	
Per cent of all juvenile titles.....		50.6		86.3
Number of non-fiction titles	291		106	
Per cent of all juvenile titles.....		31.6		13.7
Number of "easy" titles....	165		(c)	
Per cent of all juvenile titles.....		17.8		(c)
Total number of juvenile titles.....	923		774	
Per cent of all titles held.		38.1		35.7

^aThe "Demonstration County" is one of the counties in which the Minnesota State-wide WPA Library Project operated library service demonstrations during 1940 and 1941.

^bThe "Contract County" is a Minnesota county which receives library service by contract from an established local public library.

^cThe Contract County does not have a separate classification for "easy" books.

each collection according to four broad categories: fiction, non-fiction, adult, and juvenile. It also reveals that although the Contract county's collection was nearly twice the size of that in the Demonstration county, the latter had the greater number of different titles, for over half of the books in the Contract county were duplicate volumes.

In the Demonstration county books for children constitute 38 per cent of all titles held. In the Contract county 35 per cent of the titles fall into this category.

In the Demonstration county collection 619, or almost 40 per cent of its 1,554 adult titles, are non-fiction. In the Contract county, on the other hand, only 247, or less than 18 per cent of its 1,394 titles, are non-fiction. In juvenile books a similar difference appears. In the Demonstration county barely 50 per cent of the titles for children are classed as fiction, whereas in the Contract county this classification accounts for over 86 per cent of all the titles held. In contrast, the Demonstration county had almost 300 non-fiction children's books, as opposed to barely 100 in the Contract county. If it is admitted that non-fiction is inherently "better" than fiction, then the WPA-assisted county clearly has proportionately the "better" collection of library reading materials.

As a further comparative test, a qualitative analysis of these two county library collections was made by checking their holdings against five different standard lists of books and authors. Admittedly there is no single list of books which every library should attempt to stock in its entirety. Admittedly also, it is exceedingly difficult to evaluate a single book collection merely by counting the number of titles it holds on a given list, or even on several different lists. In comparative evaluations, however, lists provide a very useful rough basis for judging the relative merit or quality of two or more different library collections. If the lists are sufficiently comprehensive each library is certain to have some of the titles listed. If the lists also make broad qualitative distinctions between titles, it can readily be shown which collections contain the largest proportion of the better or more permanently useful publications.

The lists used in evaluating the Demonstration county and the Contract county collections are all selective lists of titles compiled by and for librarians. Two of the lists contain only

fiction. One contains only non-fiction. One is restricted to books for children. One contains titles of all three classes. The complete results of the analysis of these two collections, compared in terms of these five measuring instruments, are presented in Tables 21 and 22.

The fiction holdings of the two collections were first checked against the fiction section of the Standard Catalog¹⁹ and the Syracuse Gold Star List²⁰ for 1941. The first of these publications is a selected list of "about 2,100 of the best novels for the average public library."²¹ The second is a much smaller list containing only about 600 titles. It was used only for titles issued since 1931, to supplement the latest edition of the Standard Catalog, Fiction Section, which appeared in that year. The check showed that well over one-third of the titles in the Demonstration county's adult fiction collection were included in one or the other of the lists, while barely one-fourth of the Contract county's fiction titles were in either list. (See Table 21.)

The non-fiction holdings of the two counties were checked against the 1940 edition of the Standard Catalog,²² a list of 12,000 titles recommended for inclusion in public library collections. The Demonstration county had 365 of the titles in this list, while the Contract county had only 144, or less than half that number. In relation to their total non-fiction holdings, however, both counties had approximately the same proportion of titles (58 per cent) from among those recommended by the Standard Catalog.

The juvenile book collections of both counties were checked against the 1941 edition of the Children's Catalog,²³ a

¹⁹Corinne Bacon (compiler), Standard Catalog for Public Libraries, Fiction Section (2d ed. rev.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1931).

²⁰Syracuse (N.Y.) Public Library, Gold Star List of American Fiction (1941 ed.; Syracuse, N.Y.: The Syracuse Public Library, 1940).

²¹Bacon, op. cit., p. 111.

²²Dorothy E. Cook and Isabel S. Monroe (compilers), Standard Catalog for Public Libraries (1940 ed.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1940).

²³Siri Andrews, Dorothy E. Cook, and Agnes Cowing (compilers), Children's Catalog (6th ed. rev.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1941).

TABLE 21

ANALYSIS OF TWO COUNTY BOOK COLLECTIONS IN MINNESOTA, IN TERMS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE
HOLDINGS IN SELECTED STANDARD LISTS OF BOOKS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Item	Demonstration County ^a			Contract County ^b		
	No. of Titles Held	Number Included in Each List	Per Cent	No. of Titles Held	Number Included in Each List	Per Cent
<u>Adult fiction</u>						
Number of titles in county collection...	935			1,147	296	25.8
Number included in standard lists.....		321				
Ratio (per cent) of located titles to all titles.....			34.3			23.4
<u>Adult non-fiction</u>						
Number of titles in county collection...	619			247	144	58.3
Number located in Standard Catalog.....		365				
Ratio (per cent) of included titles to all titles.....			58.9			40.0
<u>Juvenile</u>						
Number of titles in county collection...	923			774	310	
Number included in Children's Cataloge..		538				
Ratio (per cent) of included titles to all titles.....			58.3			

<u>Total county collection</u>				
Total number of titles.....	2,477	1,224	2,168	750
Number included in 3 standard lists ^{c,d,e}				
Ratio (per cent) of included titles to all titles.....			49.4	34.5

^aThe "Demonstration County" is one of the counties in which the Minnesota State-wide WPA Library Project operated library service demonstrations during 1940 and 1941.

^bThe "Contract County" is a Minnesota county which receives library service by contract from an established local public library.

^cCorinne Bacon (compiler), Standard Catalog for Public Libraries, Fiction Section (2d ed. rev.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1931).

Syracuse (N.Y.) Public Library, Gold Star List of American Fiction (1941 ed.; Syracuse, N.Y.: The Syracuse Public Library, 1941).

^dDorothy E. Cook and Isabel S. Monroe (compilers), Standard Catalog for Public Libraries (1940 ed.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1940).

^eSiri Andrews, Dorothy E. Cook, and Agnes Gowing (compilers), Children's Catalog (6th ed. rev.; New York: The H. W. Wilson Co., 1941).

TABLE 22

ANALYSIS OF TWO COUNTY BOOK COLLECTIONS IN MINNESOTA, IN TERMS OF THEIR
RESPECTIVE HOLDINGS IN HORTON'S BUYING LIST OF BOOKS FOR
SMALL LIBRARIES^a

	Demonstration County ^b				Contract County ^c	
	No. of Titles Held	No. Included in Horton	Per Cent	No. of Titles Held	No. Included in Horton	Per Cent
Adult						
Number of titles in county collection.....	1,554	216		1,394	147	
Number included in the Horton list.....						
Ratio (per cent) of located titles to all titles.....			13.9			10.5
Juvenile						
Number of titles in county collection.....	923	124		774	57	
Number included in the Horton list.....						
Ratio (per cent) of located titles to all titles.....			13.4			7.3
Total Holdings						
Number of titles in county collection.....	2,477	340		2,168	204	
Number included in the Horton list.....						
Ratio (per cent) of located titles to all titles.....			13.7			9.4

^aMarion Horton (compiler), Buying List of Books for Small Libraries (6th ed.; Chicago: American Library Association, 1940).

^bThe "Demonstration County" is one of the counties in which the Minnesota State-wide WPA Library Project operated library service demonstrations during 1940 and 1941.

^cThe "Contract County" is a Minnesota county which receives library service by contract from an established local public library.

list of 4,200 titles based on the recommendations of children's librarians and school librarians in active service. In the Demonstration county 538, or 58.3 per cent, of its children's titles were listed in this catalog, compared to only 310, or 40 per cent, of those in the Contract county.

When the holdings of each county on all of the above lists combined were totaled, it appeared that 1,224 titles, or almost half of those in the Demonstration county's collection, were among the titles recommended for libraries. In the Contract county only 750, or less than 35 per cent of the titles, were included in the three lists combined.

In order to test the adequacy of the three primary measures used, the entire collections of both counties were also checked against a separate measure. The tool used for this purpose was the "Horton list,"²⁴ a small but carefully selected list of books (including fiction, non-fiction, and juvenile titles) recommended for all small public libraries. The use of this list confirmed the findings revealed by the other measures. The numbers of adult and juvenile Horton titles held in each county are reported in Table 22. In the Demonstration county nearly 14 per cent of its adult titles were included among those recommended by Miss Horton, as opposed to only 10.5 per cent of the Contract county's adult collection. More than 13 per cent of the children's titles in the Demonstration county were also Horton list selections, as opposed to less than 8 per cent in the Contract county. The combined holdings of adult and juvenile titles on the list were 13.7 per cent for the Demonstration county and 9.4 per cent for the Contract county.

Since accessibility is an important factor in determining what books most persons read, the materials available at specific lending stations are those of greatest concern to the individual reader. In order to carry the comparison of these two counties down to the level of actual service, therefore, the collections of comparable lending outlets in each county were also checked against the three standard book selection guides.²⁵

²⁴Marion Horton (compiler), Buying List of Books for Small Libraries (6th ed.; Chicago: American Library Association, 1940).

²⁵Bacon, op. cit.; Syracuse (N.Y.) Public Library, op. cit.; Cook and Monroe, op. cit.; and Andrews, Cook, and Cowing, op. cit.

The collection at the Demonstration county's station was located in a drug store in a village of slightly less than 1,000 inhabitants. The deposits in this county ranged in size from 111 to 303 volumes. The one selected for analysis contained 225 volumes, consisting of 150 adult and 75 juvenile books. Over 30 per cent of the adult collection was non-fiction. Of the entire collection 112 volumes, or nearly 50 per cent, were included in one of the 3 standard lists of books recommended for library purchase.

The collection selected for analysis in the Contract county was one in a newly established branch library housed in the municipal building of a town of 1,100 inhabitants. This collection contained 218 volumes. It was staffed by volunteers from a local literary society, and included only 11 books for children. Less than 22 per cent of the adult titles were non-fiction, and only 59 titles, or 27 per cent of the entire collection, were listed in any of the 3 standard library lists.

If these collections are truly representative of the books available to individual readers in each county, there can be little doubt that the average resident of the Demonstration county had access to better reading materials than his counterpart in the particular Contract county selected for analysis.

The results of the foregoing analysis of the book collections in the two counties may be summarized briefly, as follows:

1. The Demonstration county had barely half as many volumes but many more individual titles than the Contract county.
2. In its adult collection, the Demonstration county had double the number and twice the percentage of non-fiction titles included in the standard lists used as measures.
3. The Demonstration county had many more of the titles recommended in each list checked than the Contract county.
4. With the exception of adult non-fiction, the Demonstration county also had a substantially higher proportion of its titles in each one of the lists.
5. The results of checking both collections against the Horton list for small public libraries confirmed the differences revealed by the use of the other standard measures.
6. The comparative analysis of sample deposit collections by the same measures accurately reflected the known differences in the total holdings of the two counties.

Three facts should be borne in mind in interpreting these findings. First, only the Demonstration collection can be consid-

ered as typical or representative of its group of counties. The Contract collection is located in an approximately median county among the 13 with this type of service, and it is the only one with reasonably comparable data available. In the second place, the analysis of collections was based solely on numbers of individual titles, so did not reveal the extent of duplication or the quality of the titles thus made widely available in each county. Finally, the Contract county collection, nearly twice the size of the other, had been built up over a period of many years, while the Demonstration collection had been assembled entirely during 1939 and 1940. It is obvious that all county contract collections in Minnesota cannot be judged by the one analyzed here. In the present instance, however, it appears clear that although the Contract county had nearly twice as many volumes as the Demonstration county, the latter had a notably broader selection and superior quality of titles available to its readers.

The reason for the difference in the caliber of reading materials provided in these two counties is closely related to admitted differences in their respective policies of book selection. In the Contract county the librarian is a local person without academic or formal library training, who has served in the same library for more than a quarter of a century. The library frankly follows the "demand" theory in selecting books for county readers, with the result that its collection contains 13 titles each of Joseph G. Lincoln, E. Phillips Oppenheim, and Mary Roberts Rinehart, 26 titles of Zane Grey, 28 of Grace Livingston Hill, and 33 of Kathleen Norris--to mention but a few of the authors whose works are widely duplicated and thus comprise a substantial portion of the entire county book stock.

The books for the Demonstration counties, on the other hand, are selected by the professional staff of the state Library Division, in accord with definite standards and with the needs and reading abilities of a specific group of readers in mind. As described by the individual in charge of book selection for the entire project, the purchase of new books for demonstration use stresses:

. . . popular reprints of standard fiction, the better current novels of wide appeal, readable adventure and travel narratives, and popular accounts of scientific explorations. Authoritative, simply written books on agriculture, machinery, vocations, child care, the home, self-help, social and indus-

trial problems, and international affairs are included to meet the everyday problem of the reader and to keep him informed on events in the world about him. . . . In the selection of juvenile books, less emphasis is placed on the new than on the classics of childhood published in attractive but inexpensive editions.²⁶

This comparison of book collections alone admittedly does not determine the relative adequacy of library service in two counties. In this instance, however, it does serve to suggest the advantages to be gained in rural communities by co-operation through centralized, professionally supervised book selection, as developed by the Minnesota state-wide WPA library project.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has described the organization and operation of the Minnesota state-wide WPA library project as an example of an intensive, carefully controlled program of library extension by demonstration. Attention has been called to such noteworthy features of this project as its use of centrally prepared publicity, its centralized selection and processing of books, its complete dependence upon rotating deposit collections instead of direct bookmobile service, and its provision for filling readers' requests for individual titles or for books on specific subjects. The chronological development of the project from 1938 to 1942 has been described and the results of its activities in each of its first group of demonstration counties have been discussed. Finally, an approach to an evaluation of the service rendered by the project has been made by presenting a comparative analysis of the book collections in a demonstration county and in a county served by contract with an established public library.

In conclusion, certain weaknesses in organization or operation which appear to have rendered the efforts of the Minnesota project somewhat less effective than they might have been, may be enumerated.

Divided responsibility for the over-all administration of library project activity at the state level, together with a failure of the sponsor and the WPA state office to achieve mutual understanding concerning basic objectives, were obstacles which hampered the progress of the demonstration program repeatedly

²⁶Davis, op. cit.

during its entire period of operation.

Closely related to this difficulty was the inadequate provision of supervisory personnel. Because of frequent changes in field supervisors and the failure to replace promptly those leaving the project, individual supervisors were often transferred to new territories just when the counties in which they had been stationed needed them most. Citizen support for a county library appropriation seriously needs constant professional guidance and stimulation if this goal is to be reached, however earnestly individual lay leaders may desire its achievement. Rarely can a new supervisor accomplish as much in a given area as the person who organized citizen interest from the beginning. In Minnesota the demonstration program operated for months at a time with no State Supervisor available to represent the project in individual counties when the issue of permanent tax support was being raised for settlement. In view of this fact, the achievements that were attained as a result of project activity are all the more notable.

A third weakness of the Minnesota project was its failure to "organize"²⁷ many of its demonstration counties before inaugurating service on a county-wide basis. As in South Carolina, it became evident that by "giving" the service before obtaining definite commitments for co-operation and temporary support from co-sponsoring local libraries and interested groups of citizens the difficulty of developing active participation later was substantially increased. This was particularly serious in cases where demonstration services were inaugurated without the co-operation of established public libraries.

The failure to "reach" many rural residents was another weakness of the Minnesota demonstration program. A tabulation by township of the various votes taken on the county library question reveals that except in cities and towns where an established library was not participating in the demonstration, the opposition to tax-supported county library service was predominantly rural.

²⁷The word "organizing" in this sense refers to laying the groundwork for a successful demonstration by explaining its objectives, methods, and services to interested community groups, by forming a county Citizens Library Association to sponsor the movement for permanent service, and by getting established libraries, local newspapers, radio stations, and individual civic leaders to lend their active support to the undertaking.

In Blue Earth County the rural voters in 12 out of 19 townships rejected the library proposal, while only 2 of the county's 9 cities and villages turned it down. The rural vote alone would have defeated the measure; but a larger urban vote carried it decisively. In Waseca County, although the cities and villages supported the county library proposal 2 to 1, the rural residents in 6 of the county's 12 townships voted against it. Fortunately for the county library, their combined votes were not enough to affect the result of the election. In Freeborn County the library tax proposal was carried in 7 of the county's 10 cities and villages. However, it was defeated decisively by the rural voters in all 20 townships; and in this instance the rural vote was sufficient to decide the issue. In Goodhue and Mower counties the decisive defeat of the county library proposal may be explained in part by the fact that it was presented at the township elections, in which few town and village residents participate regularly.

Most farmers (who, with their families, comprise the majority of this state's rural residents) habitually read little else than farm magazines and a weekly or daily paper. They work their own farms and have little time for reading books. They are thrifty and conservative, and hence tend to oppose additional taxes for the establishment and maintenance of such an "unnecessary luxury" as public library service. These considerations explain in part the natural opposition of rural voters to county library development. However, the consistently strong rural opposition expressed at the polls in several demonstration counties suggests that the Minnesota project's policy of relying on deposit stations alone may have resulted in failure to reach the majority of the people living outside of communities with such deposits. As has already been noted (p. 213), this project might well have experimented with at least one bookmobile unit to supplement its deposit station service, in the interest of serving rural as well as small community residents.

The final--and in many ways the most important--criticism of the Minnesota state-wide project concerns its failure to establish a single multi-county or regional library demonstration. As has been noted (p. 210), one of the announced objectives of the project was "to demonstrate the economy and practicability of a

library system organized on county and regional lines."²⁸

In the monthly news reports on the progress of the demonstration program, and in official publicity released in behalf of the project, the sponsor regularly referred to its area-wide services as "county or regional" library demonstrations. Early in 1939 it was reported that "The Blue Earth County Library Demonstration has been changed to the Mankato Regional Library Demonstration because of requests from Watonwan and Waseca counties that the benefits of the demonstration be extended to them."²⁹ However, in March of that year a separate demonstration was inaugurated in Waseca with the object of helping the county to establish an independent library system of its own. This, apparently, was the only instance in which even a beginning was made toward the organization of a regional library demonstration in Minnesota.

It is admitted that the existence of entrenched local library interests and the greater ability of individual counties to support some rural library service independently render the development of regional units somewhat more difficult in Minnesota than in South Carolina. This study, fully cognizant of the strength of local pride in communities with established local libraries, and of the limitations governing the entire conduct of project operations, is not prepared to suggest how greater progress toward the development of regional libraries might have been obtained in Minnesota. However, it is appropriate to call attention to a proposal for regional co-operation with regard to selected services which appears to be particularly applicable to conditions in southern Minnesota. This proposal³⁰ envisages a plan of co-operation wherein improved county-wide service can be obtained throughout a natural region without jeopardizing the autonomy of any existing local public libraries. It contemplates the "regionalization" of only certain technical functions, such

²⁸Minnesota Department of Education, Library Division, Minnesota Library Notes and News, XII (December, 1938), 239.

²⁹Quoted from a typewritten monthly report of the State Supervisor of the Minnesota state-wide WPA library project, January 14, 1939.

³⁰Carleton B. Joeckel, "Design for a Regional Library Unit," Library Quarterly, XII (July, 1942), 571-82.

as the ordering and processing of books, and the administration of reference service and work with children, which require more specialized personnel and book collections than the typical small, local library can command.

In terms of regional development, the potentialities of the opportunity presented by WPA library assistance were never fully achieved in Minnesota. Nevertheless, as an illustration of a WPA project organized to further the establishment of permanent library service under the general supervision of the authorized state library agency, the Minnesota state-wide project is an undertaking worthy of note.

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CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Scope and Method of the Study

The general purpose of this study has been to examine the WPA program of assistance to libraries as an experiment in federal aid. The function of this chapter is to review briefly the scope and method of the study, to summarize its principal findings, to present an over-all evaluation of the WPA library assistance program, and to indicate certain elements in the program which appear to merit inclusion in any future plan for federal library aid. The more specific object of the investigation has been to describe and to evaluate the characteristic WPA pattern of assisting in library development by conducting county or regional library demonstrations. This evaluation is based on a study of the organization and administration of WPA library assistance projects in 1940 and 1941.

The methods employed throughout the study are those of applied research in public administration,¹ with special emphasis upon the case study. The evaluation of WPA library assistance at the national level is treated as a case study in which the objectives and policies of the entire program are considered in terms of official statements, basic regulations, and recommended operating procedures formulated for the guidance of state-wide project supervisors by the Library Service Section of the WPA in Washington. At the state level two case studies of individual state-wide library projects (South Carolina and Minnesota) are presented as examples of the adaptation of the WPA pattern of library assistance to two entirely different sets of geographic, economic, and social conditions.

The sources of data include various books, articles, and laws and regulations dealing with work relief, publications on

¹John M. Priffner, Research Methods in Public Administration (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1940), chap. 1.

library extension and public administration, official reports of library project operation, correspondence and interviews with WPA officers and project sponsors, and notes from visits to individual county and regional library service demonstrations.

Two sets of criteria are used for the administrative evaluation of the WPA library assistance program: (1) a statement of "principles of administrative organization" formulated by Floyd W. Reeves,² and (2) a "code of best practice for a library demonstration program" based on an analysis of earlier county or regional library demonstrations.

Principal Findings

The principal findings of the study may be summarized in three sections: (1) library assistance under the FERA, PWA, CWP, and NYA, (2) the WPA library assistance program, and (3) library project administration at the state level.

Library assistance under the FERA, PWA, CWP, and NYA.--- Library service, like relief of the needy, has been traditionally a local responsibility in the United States. During the depression, however, the federal government assumed a definite responsibility for certain phases of public relief, and, through its work relief projects, developed a substantial program of indirect federal library aid.

The first federal work programs which assisted libraries were the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Public Works Administration,³ both established in 1933. The function of the former agency was to make grants for relief to the individual states, which then applied the funds to direct or work relief at their own discretion. Various types of library work and some public library construction were undertaken as "made-work" projects under state FERA programs. The PWA, as a recovery agency established to assist in the financing of locally sponsored construction projects, also benefited libraries by making grants for

²Floyd W. Reeves, "Some General Principles of Administrative Organization" in C. B. Joeckel (ed.), Current Issues in Library Administration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 1-21.

³Originally entitled the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works.

many new library buildings.

During the critical winter of 1933-34 the Civil Works Program was hastily created to provide immediate jobs for the nation's unemployed, while state programs and PWA projects were getting under way. Naturally enough, the library activities of this emergency program were largely continuations of those begun under the FERA. In March, 1934, the federally-administered CWF was discontinued; and until the establishment of the WPA in 1935 all work relief was conducted under state-operated programs financed with FERA funds. Many of the library activities of both the FERA and the CWF may be characterized best as temporary, hastily conceived "busy-work," undertaken in many instances without providing the adequate tools, materials, equipment, or supervision necessary to produce results of lasting value.

Complete, reliable statistics of the nature and extent of library assistance rendered under these early programs are not available, since most library projects before the WPA consisted of temporary, hastily planned activities, administered locally and rarely reported systematically. It is known that early in 1935 over 10,000 women were receiving employment on nearly 1,000 independent, local FERA library projects in 42 states, and that by the end of that year FERA workers had begun the construction of nearly 100 new library buildings and had renovated over 250 older libraries.⁴ Much of the work carried on as library work relief at this time was of a "house-keeping" character, such as cleaning, mending, and relettering books, cataloging special collections, compiling local indexes, and making needed building repairs. In some communities without established libraries FERA projects were organized to provide temporary book-lending services. Most of these library service experiments, however, lacked the supervision, book collections, quarters, and materials essential to the development of adequate service for even a very small community.

In spite of the improvement and expansion of library work relief which has occurred under the WPA, the importance of these early experimental programs should not be minimized. In a nation

⁴U.S. Federal Emergency Relief Administration, "Library Service through Work Projects for Women" (FERA Bulletin, Series W-62, No. 4679, January 24, 1935). (Mimeographed.)

with no previous experience in federal library aid, the rapid addition of over 10,000 persons to the number normally engaged in library activities cannot be considered inconsequential. Nevertheless, in relation to the evolution of library assistance, it appears that the most important accomplishments of these FERA and CWP experiments were the demonstration of the suitability of library work as a form of relief employment, the revelation of the need for planning, and the provision of professional supervision, books, and certain equipment in the development of permanently useful library work programs.

In 1935 nation-wide work relief was completely reorganized. The FERA was superseded by the newly established WPA and its administrative affiliate, the NYA. Unlike the FERA, which merely financed state-operated relief activities, both of these agencies operated extensive work programs themselves.

From 1935 to 1942 federal assistance to libraries centered in the WPA's nation-wide program of library service projects. However, the NYA also rendered a not inconsiderable amount of assistance to libraries during this same period, both in its Out-of-School Work Program, and its Student Work Program.

In its Out-of-School Work Program the NYA undertook to establish local library services in many small communities formerly without them; but this activity never approached the extensive scope of the WPA's library demonstration program. In the fall of 1938, when NYA library projects were at their peak, they were employing nearly 7,000 youth (largely in Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, and Missouri) on a part-time basis. Most of these projects lacked the books and supervision needed for good service. They were limited by their dependence on youthful, part-time workers. And they tended to conflict with the more comprehensive programs of WPA library projects in some states. During 1941, therefore, NYA library service projects were largely discontinued.

The NYA's Out-of-School Work Program also benefited libraries in some of its construction or manual training activities. In its wood-working shops, part-time project employees constructed shelving and furniture for numerous established public and school libraries. NYA workers also constructed over 50 new library buildings and renovated or repaired almost 350 others.

Perhaps the most important assistance libraries have received from the NYA is that rendered by part-time assistants

under the Student Work Program. Monthly statistics on this type of library aid are not available. However, it can be reported that in the spring of 1941 over 50,000 youth, or approximately 12 per cent of all Student Work employees, were engaged in work for libraries. This program alone represents a type of federal aid of the greatest importance to many inadequately staffed and supported school and college libraries.

The WPA library assistance program.---From the beginning assistance to libraries has been more comprehensive and more systematically developed by the WPA than the NYA. This is because the latter agency merely looked on library service as a means of creating part-time work for inexperienced youth, while the WPA considered its library assistance activities as a separate program with permanently useful objectives of its own.

At the time of its inauguration in 1935, the WPA included library service in its preferred projects for needy women and professional and white-collar workers. Recognizing the importance of sound planning, WPA officials early solicited advice and help from experienced librarians in developing uniform procedures and minimum operating standards for all library service projects. In 1936 the WPA began to employ trained, non-relief librarians as project supervisors, and authorized the expenditure of limited amounts of federal funds for books and mobile equipment needed as "tools" by an effective library assistance program.

Finally, in 1938, the WPA established the Library Service Section as a "staff" or advisory office in the central headquarters in Washington. The principal functions of the Section were: (1) to assist the agency in planning and co-ordinating its various library assistance activities, (2) to formulate objectives, policies, standards, and technical procedures for use on individual projects, and (3) to furnish professional advice and assistance to project supervisors and sponsors throughout the nation. The consolidation of library assistance in each state into a single "state-wide" project, and the redirection of the program toward an emphasis upon rural library demonstrations during 1938, completed the most important steps in the evolution of the WPA pattern of assistance to libraries.

At least four distinct kinds of WPA library assistance may be distinguished. They are: (1) the construction and repair of library buildings, (2) the preparation and publication

of various indexes, bibliographies, and other reference books, (3) the provision of relief workers to assist established libraries in expanding their services, and (4) the operation of demonstrations to further the development of permanent library service in formerly unserved areas. This study is concerned primarily with aid to existing libraries and the extension of library service by demonstration, for these comprise the two principal functions performed by the WPA state-wide library projects. Library construction and bibliographic projects are not administratively a part of the WPA library program, although the Library Service Section renders advisory service to the sponsors of bibliographic undertakings.

WPA aid to established libraries involves the employment of relief workers to perform almost any type of library work which represents an expansion of the services normally rendered by each library. Staffing a small library for longer hours than usual, repairing worn or damaged books, cataloging uncataloged collections, and preparing picture or clipping collections are typical services performed in this phase of WPA library assistance. The actual work performed, therefore, includes the same kind of activities that are carried on as regular functions in established library systems. However, lest individual communities may use federal assistance to replace local support of library services, all work done by WPA project workers in any library must be shown to constitute a real extension of that particular library's normal program of service. This limitation of relief work for existing libraries to new or additional services is a key point in the WPA's library assistance policy.

Under the pattern of organization established in 1938, all WPA library assistance activities in each state are administered as a single state-wide project. This project, which includes both aid to established libraries and the operation of library service demonstrations, requires approval from the central WPA administration in Washington (including the Library Service Section) before it can begin to function. Thereafter, it is administratively responsible only to the State WPA Administrator, although its supervisors may call upon the Library Service Section in Washington at any time for technical or professional guidance. Usually it is sponsored by the state library agency and co-sponsored by each participating local library, school

board, or other interested public body.

During 1938, the extension or demonstration aspect of WPA library assistance began to receive increasing emphasis. From 1939 to 1942 it constituted the dominant phase of most state-wide library projects. All WPA library service demonstrations are co-operative enterprises involving federal, state, and local participation. The federal government provides workers to staff the service, professional supervisors, some new books, and perhaps a share in the cost of necessary mobile equipment. The state sponsor usually contributes office space, books, and some supervision. Local co-sponsors also provide quarters, and some books and funds. Finally, individual citizens and citizens' organizations participate by working for continuation by tax support of the service inaugurated by the WPA.

Further, a WPA demonstration is essentially a tool to assist individual communities in obtaining library service through the establishment of county or regional libraries. It organizes area-wide service and operates it until the assisted communities have had time to provide for its permanent support. During this period the federal government may furnish as much as 75 per cent of the total cost of the project. When the issue of permanent support is raised and settled, demonstration assistance is customarily withdrawn.

A detailed comparison of the WPA pattern of library extension by demonstration with several previous noteworthy library service demonstrations⁵ indicates that the WPA program is essentially sound, notwithstanding its dependence on relief workers for most of its personnel.

Like these other programs, the WPA emphasized administration at the county, or operating level, and the centralization of book selection, processing, and the distribution of demonstration collections. The policy of vesting considerable authority in district and area supervisors over the conduct of individual county demonstrations made it possible to adapt the WPA's recommended procedures to peculiar local conditions while maintaining satisfactory standards of project operation. The plan of cen-

⁵ The Louisiana, Fraser Valley, and Prince Edward Island demonstrations, assisted by the Carnegie Corporation, the Rosenwald county library demonstration in the South, and the Tennessee Valley Authority's library assistance program.

tralizing book selection and cataloging for all demonstrations at the state level also provided each assisted county with a quality of professional service that would not otherwise have been available to individual counties.

The expenditure of "outside" funds (in this case, federal funds) for supervision, books, and bookmobiles was another characteristic in which the WPA state-wide projects followed the precedent established by previous demonstration programs. It was this policy, in fact, which made WPA library assistance so much more productive of permanently worthwhile results than the library activities carried on under earlier work relief programs.

Emphasis on area-wide service at the county or regional level was another important feature of the WPA program—a feature in which it resembled other demonstrations but differed from most FERA and Civil Works Program library projects.

Through the device of sponsorship, and through the organization of citizen's library associations in each demonstration area, the WPA assured its assistance program of the active participation of local communities in the development of permanent library service through its county and regional demonstrations. As in each of the earlier demonstration undertakings, the WPA enlisted the active support of civic leaders, local radio and press facilities, and citizens' organizations in behalf of the movement for tax-supported county library service; and in many states it even negotiated contractual agreements with local library boards and organized lay groups for definite financial participation in its library service demonstrations.

Finally, the methods of safeguarding the standards of service offered by the WPA program are worthy of special mention, since it had to depend largely on inexperienced relief personnel to staff its lending centers and to perform the clerical work on all of its demonstrations. The establishment of the Library Service Section in Washington to formulate recommended procedures for library project operation and to assist the states in planning their demonstration programs was one device that contributed materially to the development of sound state-wide projects. The employment of professionally trained supervisors, in the ratio of one to every twenty relief workers, was a second important factor contributing to the success of the entire WPA library assistance program. And the in-service training courses conducted by

individual state projects was a third device extensively utilized to render the services of relief workers more effective. These courses, planned and administered by each state-wide project's supervisory personnel, provided enough simple instruction in basic library techniques to make project employees reasonably competent clerical or subprofessional library workers. With few exceptions, therefore, WPA library demonstrations were able to develop standards of service fully as satisfactory as those of previously established demonstration programs.

From the point of view of administration, the WPA is a typical line-and-staff organization with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility. It has four vertical hierarchical levels corresponding to four geographical divisions of diminishing size. These four levels are the Central Administration, Regional offices, State Administrations, and District offices. The two highest levels are planning, supervising, and policy-making levels but they conduct no work projects directly. Under the WPA's plan of decentralized administration the state is the primary operating level, while the district is the level for the management of individual projects. At each level there are four functional divisions concerned with: (1) employment; (2) research, statistics, and finance; (3) engineering projects; and (4) community service programs. Library projects constitute a separate program within the Division of Community Service Programs.

Authority over the operation of all WPA projects passes directly down through the chiefs of the four vertical levels to the heads of their respective functional divisions. However, professional guidance is assured to the specialized divisions at each level by the provision that the central divisional directors should render technical instruction and advice to specific projects in their fields at all levels. Thus, although a State-wide Library Project Supervisor is administratively responsible to his State Administrator, he is free to negotiate directly with the Library Service Section in Washington concerning the professional or technical aspects of project operation.

In general, it may be said that the WPA library assistance program observes accepted principles of good administration. It has a practical span of control for most of its officers. It delegates authority with responsibility. It groups its employees

according to logical bases of homogeneity. And it makes at least some provision for co-ordination by integrating all library activities in a single project in each state.

The primary administrative weakness of the program is its failure to provide the Library Service Section with enough authority to enforce the maintenance of minimum standards for the operation of all library projects. As a "staff" or advisory officer, the Director of this section can only make suggestions or recommendations to the supervisors of individual state-wide projects. This is because library assistance is but one of many programs operated by the WPA; and it has been the belief of WPA leaders that the efficiency and co-ordination of work programs at the state level might be seriously weakened if individual projects were subject to direct administrative control by their professional or technical representatives in Washington.

It has been noted that complete reports on the extent of library assistance rendered through each federal work program are not available. Enough figures are at hand, however, to show that in the aggregate this aid has been considerable. In fact, it has been far more substantial than many librarians, who know library work relief only as it has affected their own libraries, realize. Whatever the merits or weaknesses of individual library projects may be, they have brought about an improvement in the nation's library facilities and an extension in library services that undoubtedly would never have been undertaken on such a scale with state and local funds alone.

In the construction phase of assistance to libraries various federal work programs had completed over 1,500 different projects by the end of 1941.⁶ These achievements include the erection of more than 350 new library buildings. The WPA, assisted by state and local matching appropriations, financed the construction of over 100 new libraries in 40 states, at a total cost of nearly \$13,000,000; and it aided in the provision of library quarters in some 1,800 different school buildings. The WPA constructed nearly 200 new libraries or additions, and renovated well over 800 others. Complete fiscal reports on WPA and

⁶The figures mentioned in this summary of federal library assistance are quoted from chap. iv, where more detailed statistics are presented with full documentation.

NYA library construction are not available; so the total extent of this type of federal library aid cannot be presented in this study. It would appear, however, that the total expenditures (including both federal and state contributions) on federally-assisted library construction and repair from 1933 through 1941 were nearer \$50,000,000 than \$25,000,000.

From its establishment, in 1935, the WPA alone spent nearly \$100,000,000 of federal funds on library service projects, or almost double the amount usually spent in support of public libraries throughout the entire United States each year. During 1940-41, the total cost of WPA library projects was over \$26,000,000. In other words, during that year the addition of WPA library activities increased by one-half the nation's normal expenditure for public library service. Almost \$19,000,000, or over 72 per cent of this amount, represents non-reimbursable federal library aid, since it was the WPA's share of the total cost of project operation. Over \$500,000 of WPA funds were spent for books, bookmobile rentals, and other non-labor items.

It is of interest to note that although this federal contribution to library projects in 1940-41 constituted only 1.5 per cent of all WPA expenditures for that year, it exceeded the amount of aid which, if distributed on an equalization basis, could provide every state in the nation with a \$.60 per capita standard of library service.⁷ Moreover, during that year, 18 different states each received over \$500,000 in WPA library project assistance. In terms of state-wide development, therefore, WPA expenditures represent a very real and considerable program of federal aid for library development.

The actual amount of WPA library aid received by individual states during 1940-41 ranged from nearly \$2,000,000 down to \$700. The median was approximately \$250,000. Ohio, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey, and California each received more than \$1,000,000 in library project benefits that year. Four states, Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, and South Carolina, received benefits exceeding \$.25 per capita from the program. The range in per capita benefits was from \$.28 down to \$.001, with a median of \$.13.

⁷The amount required for such an equalized program is less than \$17,000,000, according to Carleton B. Joeckel, Library Service (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1938), p. 85.

On a regional basis the Midwest, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin, obtained far greater benefits from library projects than any other section of the United States, for these eight states together received more than one-third of all WPA library assistance funds that year.

The pattern of distribution of WPA library project expenditures is of particular interest to this study. In order to determine whether benefits from the program were apportioned according to differences in need, the distribution of federal expenditures on library work relief in 1940-41 was compared with five measures of the states' relative need for library aid. The measures used for these comparisons were: (1) population, (2) the number of people in each state without library service, (3) annual per capita amounts of federal aid recommended in a proposed "Schedule of Federal Grants to Libraries,"⁸ (4) annual per capita income payments, and (5) annual per capita library support. The method used in making these comparisons was that of rank order correlation, in which the rank order of the states in library project benefits received is related to their rank according to each of the measures of relative need. The first two measures were compared with gross amounts of federal funds received, while the other three measures were related to per capita benefits.

Of the five measures used only the first two are at all closely associated with the distribution of library assistance in 1940-41. The rank order correlation of project benefits with population is +.91, or very high, while their relation to the number of people without library service in each state is +.53. On the other hand, there is no important relationship whatever, between per capita benefits received and any of the three per capita measures used; for none of these rank order correlations is higher than +.16.

The five measures used for these comparisons are admittedly not accurate indexes of need for federal library aid. Nevertheless, they are all clearly associated with this need; and, as they are used in this study, they help to characterize the pattern according to which WPA library assistance was apportioned in 1940-41. The correlations show definitely that in that year library project benefits were distributed at least roughly on the

⁸Joeckel, op. cit.

basis of population, and, to a lesser extent, according to the number of persons without library service in each state. They also show, however, that on a per capita basis there was almost no relationship whatever between the amount of assistance received and various economic measures of need. The close relationship existing between project benefits and population is readily explained by the fact that the distribution of funds for all WPA activities has been based on population and on estimates of the relief needs of the various states.

Within individual states, two other factors played an important part in determining the relative emphasis given to library projects in relation to other types of white-collar relief work. These are the existence of a strong and active state library agency, ready to plan and supervise a sound library assistance program, and a popular and articulate citizen interest in the state-wide extension of tax-supported public library service. States in which these factors were present naturally tended to benefit proportionately more from the program than others lacking in active, organized professional and lay library leadership.

Expenditures on library projects are but one measure of the extent of the library assistance rendered by the WPA. Statistics on employment and on selected aspects of project achievement also help to describe the scope of the WPA's library program. Library project employment fluctuated considerably from month to month each year. In 1938, when the WPA program was at its peak, library projects were providing full-time work for over 38,000 persons, or more than the number normally employed as "librarians and library assistants" throughout the entire nation.⁹ During the year 1940-41, an average of 25,000 persons were employed on WPA library service projects. Non-relief supervisors comprised less than 4 per cent of the program's personnel. Over 80 per cent of its workers were women at that time.

To provide concrete examples of library project accomplishment, a few additional statistics may be cited. By June, 1941, WPA workers had repaired approximately 100,000,000 worn or damaged books for public and school libraries since the beginning

⁹U.S. Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933), V, 48. This enumeration reports a total of 31,478 persons employed as "Librarians and Library Assistants."

of the program in 1935. The WPA had purchased over 260,000 new books for use in library service demonstrations, and had assisted approximately 150 different counties in obtaining bookmobiles for extending library service to rural areas. During July, August, and September, 1941, over 1,700, or more than half of all the counties in the United States, were receiving some library assistance from the WPA. At that time WPA workers were operating 365 area-wide library service systems, including 22 regional systems serving 71 counties. In addition to these area-wide systems the WPA was also staffing 2,664 independent local libraries. These WPA-operated library services had a combined book stock of nearly 8,000,000 volumes, and they were serving an estimated total population of almost 14,000,000 persons. During this same period the WPA was providing various types of additional assistance to over 4,300 established libraries.

Thus, in summary, the most important single fact concerning WPA assistance to libraries is its magnitude. Analysis of the distribution of project benefits shows that they were apportioned roughly according to population, and only slightly in proportion to relative need for federal library aid. Finally, a consideration of the entire WPA library assistance program in terms of administrative principles and library extension practice reveals that in spite of its limitations as a work relief enterprise, the WPA developed a pattern of assistance to libraries that is essentially practicable, and is administratively and professionally sound.

Library project administration at the state level.---Two diametrically opposite policies have characterized WPA library project administration at the state level. One of these policies looks upon WPA library assistance as a temporary opportunity that should be made available immediately, even in small amounts, to all parts of the state at once. The other policy considers this aid as a resource which can be used to best advantage by concentrating it in a few areas, in large enough amounts to provide a strong foundation for the development of permanent, adequately supported library service. One of the state-wide WPA library projects (South Carolina) which this study treats in detail was guided by the first of these two policies. The other (Minnesota) adhered consistently to the second policy.

In South Carolina, the state as a whole is relatively

poor and is overwhelmingly rural, with the exception of three metropolitan counties. When WPA library assistance first became available, South Carolina had no active state library agency, very little area-wide library service, few adequately supported local libraries, and little or no effective library leadership. Some library work relief had been started under the FERA; and, soon after the WPA was established, a state-wide library project was organized in South Carolina, with the State Board of Education as sponsor. By the end of 1936, WPA workers were operating school and public library services in nearly all of the state's 46 counties. By 1941, over 30 bookmobiles, for use in as many counties, had been obtained with federal aid. At that time almost 700 workers were employed by this project, separate library facilities for Negroes had been provided in 12 different counties, and two regional library demonstrations had been started on an experimental basis.

From the point of view of increased support for libraries, the results of South Carolina's use of WPA assistance are somewhat disappointing. While many of the state's counties are not financially able to support adequate, independent library systems, some others that could afford to tax themselves for county service came to consider WPA-assisted demonstrations as permanent, federally-subsidized services. It is questionable, therefore, whether South Carolina's plan of extending some service to all sections of the state at once has laid sound foundations for adequate, self-sufficient service in many of the counties that have benefited from the program. This policy has, however, made some books available in every county, whereas 21 counties had no public libraries at all before the WPA. And perhaps it has created an awareness of the benefits of public library service that, properly directed, may eventually lead to more permanent library development in South Carolina, through some form of state aid for libraries.

In Minnesota an entirely different situation existed when the WPA state-wide library project was organized, late in 1938. Here, because of these different conditions, the second policy, that of concentrating WPA assistance in a few, strong demonstrations, was followed. Minnesota has a much more stable economy than South Carolina, based on a diversified agricultural program and rich mineral deposits. It has nearly twice the per capita

economic ability of South Carolina, and had made substantially greater progress in library development before the WPA. It had 145 tax-supported local public libraries. It had 13 counties which received some service by contract with established libraries. And it had an active library agency competent to plan and direct a program of rural library extension suited to the needs of the state.

Like South Carolina, Minnesota had established a number of locally sponsored library work relief undertakings before its WPA state-wide project was organized. In 1938, however, all such activities were superseded by a single project, sponsored by the official state library agency. From that time until 1942, when the project was formally terminated, WPA library assistance in Minnesota was concentrated in a series of intensive library service demonstrations in two selected groups of counties in the relatively prosperous, southern part of the state. During 1939 and 1940 the project operated demonstrations in only 6 of the state's 87 counties. In 1941 it started its second series of demonstrations in 7 additional counties.

The Minnesota project was characterized by close supervision by the sponsor, carefully directed, centrally prepared publicity, a dependence on rotating deposit collections rather than bookmobiles for serving rural readers, the centralized selection and preparation of books, and provisions for filling individual requests for books not included in local deposits. The book stock of individual demonstrations varied with the size, population, and number of towns and villages in each county. Some counties had as few as 8 deposit stations and barely 1,000 books. Others had as many as 20 stations and over 3,000 volumes. The size of individual book deposits ranged from 50 or 75 volumes to more than 300.

The specific objective of the Minnesota demonstration program was to further the establishment of tax-supported, county-wide library service by contract with existing public libraries. By the spring of 1942, this goal had been achieved in 3 of the first 7 demonstration counties. The 6 remaining demonstrations had not been in operation long enough to warrant submitting the issue of tax support to the voters for final settlement.

The effectiveness of the Minnesota state-wide library project was somewhat weakened by a division of authority over

certain phases of project operation within the WPA itself and by a failure of the sponsor and the WPA administration to achieve a complete understanding concerning basic objectives for the program. The entire undertaking was also seriously affected by frequent changes in supervisory personnel and by a prolonged vacancy in the position of State Supervisor during 1940, when the first group of demonstrations were being brought to a close. It appears that in some areas the complete reliance on deposit collections may have failed to make books sufficiently accessible to rural readers to stimulate full use of the service and adequate support for its continuance. It is also unfortunate that the Minnesota project failed to develop a single bi-county or regional demonstration, although some form of regional co-operation must be undertaken in this state before satisfactory library service can be made universally available.

One aspect of this study's findings which has not yet been mentioned concerns the need for additional research, which has become evident in the course of the investigation. The writer has been confronted repeatedly by an inadequacy of information, which, if available, would have provided a more meaningful frame of reference for evaluating WPA assistance to libraries. Several studies are needed to supply this information. For example, before a satisfactory formula can be developed for the distribution of federal library aid, a thoroughgoing study of the ability of the various states to support library service must be made. In fact, if such a study is to be useful in planning a workable proposal for federal aid, it should be preceded by a study of the various bases for obtaining tax support for libraries in different states, according to existing legislation.

Another investigation urgently needed as a prerequisite to sound library planning is a study of the differences in costs of area-wide library service under various forms of organization and support. This, in turn, suggests a study of regional experiments in the administration of rural library service and a study of the role of the bookmobile in extending library service to rural readers.

The techniques and results of successful library demonstration programs are usually reported in professional library periodicals. A critical study of the factors contributing to the failure of unsuccessful demonstration experiments would be of

inestimable value to library extension workers in planning future programs aimed at the establishment of permanent, tax-supported library service. Finally, even though many librarians assume that federal and state aid for libraries is desirable, a study of the proper role of both the federal government and the states in the development, support, and supervision of library service is needed to clarify the issues involved in contemporary discussions of federal and state library aid.

Evaluation of WPA Library Assistance as Federal Aid

The WPA program of assistance to libraries came into being as a by-product of federally-administered work relief, and therefore cannot be expected to exhibit all of the attributes of an ideal plan for federal library aid. Nevertheless, it may now be appropriate, by way of conclusion, to mention the principal deficiencies of WPA library assistance as well as its more commendable characteristics as an experiment in federal aid, in order to show what implications this program may have for future library planning.

Weaknesses of the WPA program.---Inadequate planning and general direction has been one of the principal weaknesses of WPA library assistance from the beginning. Because library projects evolved as a relatively insignificant phase of an emergency employment program, they have developed by trial-and-error methods, instead of according to a carefully formulated plan. In defense of the library assistance program it can only be said that when the WPA was established in 1935 the necessity for beginning project operations immediately made it impossible for the WPA to plan any of its activities with the thoroughness which an ideal program would require.

Another weakness of the WPA library program was the Library Service Section's dependence on advice and persuasion in inducing individual states to develop satisfactory standards of project operation. As has been pointed out, library assistance was only an incidental objective of the WPA; and in the interest of efficient administration of the entire work program, final authority over the conduct of all types of projects was centered in a single administrator at the state level. Thus, the Library Service Section's most effective control over individual projects

was achieved largely by developing friendly relations with state library project supervisors and by diplomatic dealings with project sponsors.

A third criticism of the WPA library assistance program concerns its failure to establish a stable, uniformly applicable pattern of service to local communities. After 1938 the Library Service Section did try to encourage the development of library assistance according to a basic, uniform pattern. In some states, however, where its recommendations were not followed, WPA projects inaugurated services duplicating, if not openly competing with, those of established library agencies. In fairness to the WPA, it should be noted that this situation was the exception.

Another weakness of the WPA program as an experiment in federal aid was its failure to apportion its benefits according to the need for library assistance. With regard to this criticism it can only be reiterated that the WPA was primarily an employment program, and hence distributed its funds in accord with employment needs without considering more specific needs, such as the need for federal library aid.

Considerable criticism has been directed at the WPA library assistance program for the inadequacy of its personnel. It is readily conceded that many library project employees lack the natural aptitude for developing into competent, full-time library assistants. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that this program was dependent for its very existence on providing work for persons in need of relief. It is therefore to the credit of the WPA that it emphasized professional supervision and developed in-service training programs in order to make up for the inevitable limitations in the quality of its basic project personnel.

Finally, numerous librarians have complained that because of the additional burdens it places on them for supervision and petty details of administration, WPA library assistance frequently involves more expense to established libraries than the assistance it renders is worth. During the first years of federal work relief there was considerable justification for this particular complaint. By 1941, however, the WPA itself was providing extensive administrative and professional supervision that relieved participating librarians of many of these details; so this objection has been voiced but rarely since then.

In a very real sense the entire WPA library program can

be considered an administrative dilemma, almost incapable of wholly satisfactory solution. Most of its weaknesses, as already noted in this study, are directly related to its status as a work relief undertaking. Naturally, had this program been concerned primarily, and not incidentally, with federal aid for libraries, many of the limitations mentioned here would not have been permitted to exist; for they seriously hampered the effectiveness of the program as an experiment in federal library aid. Therefore, in consideration of the conditions within which WPA library projects had to function, the results that have been achieved in spite of their fundamental deficiencies are doubly notable.

Strength of the WPA program.---In spite of the WPA library program's weaknesses, many of its features were highly commendable. For example, in the administrative organization of WPA library assistance, the co-ordination of project activity at the state level, the centralization of certain technical functions, and the provision for competent professional guidance at the national level, are all outstanding characteristics of the program.

Emphasis on local initiative and active citizen participation is another noteworthy feature which contributes to the success of WPA library assistance activities in many states. The decentralization of responsibility for the development of individual demonstrations, to permit the adaptation of project procedures to local conditions, and the device of local co-sponsorship through the formation of citizens' library committees, both served to further this objective. The policy of organizing demonstration service through and with the full co-operation of established libraries stimulated local interest and good will. And the creation of professional advisory committees for individual state-wide projects helped to obtain the active support of librarians for undertakings assisted by the projects.

Another notable characteristic of the WPA program is its emphasis on county or area-wide library service. Earlier library projects had encouraged the development of small, independent, local public libraries with federal assistance, but the WPA demonstration program focused its attention on making area-wide service available in units large enough for efficient operation and adequate support from an entire county or region.

A final commendable feature of the WPA library assistance program is its provision for personnel administration. Through

its Library Service Section in Washington the WPA established standard qualifications for the selection of library project supervisors; and, by means of lessons, institutes, conferences, and manuals, it developed in-service training programs both for supervisors and workers engaged in library assistance activities. In spite of its dependence on relief workers to staff its services, the WPA endeavored constantly to improve the quality and efficiency of its library project personnel.

Implications for Future Federal Library Aid

Thus, the net result of this analysis of the evolution of library work relief in the United States has been to show that, although the program was hastily conceived and was seriously limited by its necessary subordination to the work relief objective, it rendered substantial, essentially sound, and permanently useful assistance to the development of library service throughout the nation.

The record of the WPA has demonstrated that work relief can become an important medium for the extension of federal assistance to libraries, and that the employment of needy persons is not necessarily incompatible with the achievement of worthwhile results. The extent to which libraries may participate in future federally-assisted work programs will probably depend on how well they are prepared with efficient plans for such participation. Moreover, the likelihood of libraries ever obtaining federal aid per se will also depend in part on the soundness of their proposals and the skill with which they are presented.

It is more than likely that some kind of federal work program will be needed after the present war if the nation is to make the readjustment to a peace-time economy without widespread unemployment and suffering. This study, therefore, concludes with a statement of suggestions intended to show how such a program might include assistance to libraries without repeating the weaknesses that have characterized WPA library assistance activities.

Since the first requisite for any successful program is careful planning, libraries should begin at once to develop long-range plans for future construction needs and expansions of service which might be undertaken quickly but efficiently as work projects. State library agencies likewise should study and eval-

uate the results of their experience with WPA library assistance, and should begin to formulate improved programs for the future. If no such planning is undertaken, many libraries will be as unprepared to participate in post-war work programs as they were in 1933.

If library work is to be an important part of such a future federal program, every effort should be made at the outset to establish a strong central office to assist in planning all library aspects of the entire program, and to develop sound policies, procedures, and standards to govern the operation of library assistance activities in all states. This office could be given technical authority over all undertakings affecting libraries, without necessarily interfering with the flow of administrative authority at the state level. Such a device would simply give the central office the kind of authority which the Library Service Section of the WPA so sorely lacked. It would also assure a central clearance of all work proposals affecting libraries, and would provide for the acquisition of regular, uniform reports on all phases of federal library assistance. The staff of the central office should be large enough to permit it to carry on continual research and to issue a regular news letter or information bulletin to library project personnel and interested individuals and organizations throughout the nation.

At the state level, supervision of library work programs should also be considerably strengthened. The plan of organizing all library work activities in a single state-wide project should be maintained, but the relation between the project administration and the state library agency should be much more clearly defined than it has been under the WPA. It might be desirable to administer library assistance as a separate phase of state agency activity. Certainly, wherever possible, more authority for project planning and direction should be delegated to existing state library agencies. It is recognized, however, that many state agencies would have to be strengthened considerably before they could perform this function adequately.

The personnel for such a library work program should be chosen from the best available labor market and should not be limited to persons in need of relief. Minimum professional qualifications should be maintained for the selection of supervisors and technical specialists, and prior local residence should not

be required for these positions. The majority of workers could still be taken from the ranks of the unemployed; but the rigid restriction of employment opportunities to persons on the public relief rolls certainly should be discontinued. Many white-collar persons with some academic training will endure months of unemployment and mental suffering before they apply for public charity. By the time they have reached this stage, such persons have usually lost their morale, their confidence, and frequently, through disuse, such skills as they may have developed previously. It would benefit the program, the assisted libraries, and the workers, therefore, if mere need of employment, rather than proof of destitution, were made the condition for obtaining work on library projects in the future.

The emphasis on larger, more efficient units of library organization, a characteristic feature of WPA library assistance, especially in recent years, should be increased and strengthened in any future library work program. If it is not feasible to restrict federal assistance in establishing library facilities in unserved communities to area-wide units capable of meeting minimum standards of service and support, a new program should at least provide specific, substantial inducements to counties willing to pool their resources for the establishment of strong, regional libraries or specialized regional services. A future program should also provide enough assistance to established local libraries in demonstration areas to make their active participation worth while. This will necessitate abandoning the present artificial limitation of assistance to "new" work, and will assure the integration of existing libraries with any new, area-wide units of library organization and support which may be formed as a result of federally-assisted demonstrations.

Funds for individual demonstration programs should be available only for a specified, limited period (probably not to exceed two years). Thereafter, gradually decreasing amounts of assistance might be continued for an additional transitional period to areas that had established permanent support for the service. In areas where such support had not been established, the entire facilities of the demonstration should be withdrawn for use elsewhere. These terms of assistance should be publicized widely and should be formally accepted by county authorities and participating local libraries before a demonstration is

begun. As under the WPA, funds for library assistance should be matched by state and local contributions. However, under a new program the amount of such financial participation should be more clearly defined; and the continuance of federal aid should depend on the satisfactory maintenance of these contributions from month to month.

Finally, the federal funds for such a program should not be restricted to the payment of wages to the extent that they were under the WPA. During the entire period from 1935 through June, 1941, only 2.2 per cent of all WPA library project funds were spent for non-labor purposes. Clearly, any future plan of library assistance should provide for the use of federal funds for books, equipment, and other necessary non-labor items more nearly in proportion to the requirements of a normal library service budget.

In conclusion, it should be noted that these suggestions do not purport to represent the only feasible pattern for a federal library work program. Nor do they touch upon many details which should be included in a specific proposal for such an undertaking. They are merely offered as recommendations for consideration in the event that the opportunity again arises for libraries to participate extensively in some type of federal work program. It is believed that if these suggestions can be incorporated in such a program, many of the weaknesses that have seriously limited the effectiveness of WPA assistance to libraries may be avoided.

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